

NEW APPROACHES TO BYZANTINE HISTORY AND CULTURE

# Emotions and Gender in Byzantine Culture

EDITED BY  
STAVROULA CONSTANTINO  
AND MATI MEYER



# New Approaches to Byzantine History and Culture

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Stavroula Constantinou · Mati Meyer  
Editors

# Emotions and Gender in Byzantine Culture

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## FOREWORD

Human beings have a large repertoire of emotions. Charles Darwin, in his seminal study, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*, published in 1872, discussed suffering and weeping, low spirits, anxiety, grief, dejection, and despair, joy, high spirits, love, tender feelings, and devotion, reflection, meditation, ill-temper, sulkiness, and determination, hatred and anger, disdain, contempt, disgust, guilt, pride, helplessness, patience, and affirmation and negation, surprise, astonishment, fear and horror, and, finally, self-attention, shame, shyness and modesty. The tendency of some modern (and earlier) investigators to reduce this variety to a few basic emotions—sometimes as few as five—has come at the expense of nuance. The object of this latter approach has been to identify emotions that are invariant across different cultures; the subtle distinctions drawn by Darwin in positing so wide a range of sentiments are open to the objection that not all societies carve up the emotional domain in exactly this way, and so his system lies open to the charge that it treats the categories familiar in the English language as transhistorical. But even the so-called basic or elementary emotions turn out to be differently constituted from one society to another. There is always a cultural factor in the constitution of the emotions, even if, at some level, one wishes to affirm that the emotions are not simply and wholly socially constructed and that at some level, they reflect universally shared capacities among human beings—and perhaps even certain animals.

Take anger, one of the emotions that is regularly included among the most basic. When Aristotle, in the *Rhetoric*, affirms that ‘it is impossible



to be afraid of and angry with someone at the same time' (2.3, 1380a33), it is easy to see that his conception of anger and very possibly also of fear must be at least to some extent at odds with modern intuitions, at least in the English-speaking world, where it would seem that we might very well feel anger precisely at someone who induced fear in us. And in fact, Aristotle's conception of anger is different from modern definitions; for him, anger is a desire to avenge insults or slights, and so is closely bound up with matters of status and honor. We naturally hesitate to seek revenge against those we fear, and so in practice, we are not angry but more likely to tolerate the offense against our honor as coming from a superior and hence, in some sense, fitting. Not only are individual emotions variously inflected, but the inventory of the emotions itself is unstable across cultures. Pity, for example, would surely be included among the fundamental emotions in classical Greece and Rome, to judge by its primary place in ancient lists and discussions of the passions, and yet not only is it never acknowledged as basic by modern investigators, it is often excluded entirely even from more extensive catalogues, such as Darwin's own (it is mentioned incidentally only three times in the entire work).

That human values differ from one society to another is no surprise. The emotions, however, have long been considered to be instinctive and hence invariant across cultures. It is only recently that the history of emotions has emerged as an active field of study. Thanks in part to the extraordinary analysis of the *pathé* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, students of classical Greece have by now developed sophisticated analyses of the emotions he and others described and illustrated in action. More recently still, scholars of the Byzantine world have made substantial contributions of their own. For despite great areas of continuity between classical Greece and Byzantium, there were important changes, not least the pervasive role of Christianity in Byzantine society, which brought with it new conceptions of the emotions as well. We may see this, for example, in the understanding of pity. Aristotle had defined pity as 'a kind of pain in the case of an apparent destructive or painful harm to a person who does not deserve to encounter it, which one might expect oneself, or one of one's own, to suffer, and this when it seems near' (*Rhetoric* 2.8.2). On this conception, pity involves a moral judgment as to whether another's suffering is merited; it is not simply an instinctive empathy with anyone who is in trouble. Lactantius, in his *Institutiones Divinae*, composed in the first decade of the 4th century, argued rather that

God endowed human beings with pity in order that they might protect each other, even, he adds, when it is possible to evade the law. So conceived, Lactantius avers, pity is a virtue. Gregory of Nyssa, in turn, also regarded pity as essential to human society. In his sermon on the fifth beatitude, he cites the famous verse of the Gospel of Matthew, ‘blessed are those who pity, for they shall be pitied’ (5:7), and comments: ‘the obvious meaning of the text summons human beings to be loving and sympathetic to each other because of the unfairness and inequality of human affairs.’ Gregory then offers his own definition of pity as ‘a voluntary [*hekousios*] pain that arises at the misfortunes of others’ (*On the Beatitudes*, PG 44.1252.28-30), and he goes on to explain: ‘pity is a loving shared disposition (‘ἀγαπητικὴ συνδιάρθεσις’) with those who are suffering under painful circumstances.’ Note that Gregory does not consider whether the misfortunes that elicit pity are deserved or not; in the spirit of the Gospels, Gregory offers a formula for a kind of universal sympathy for our fellow beings. His idea of a shared disposition, moreover, seems to have something in common with modern notions of sympathy, which appeal to a merging of identities; thus Adam Smith, in his fundamental study of the moral sentiments, states that when we pity another person, ‘by the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations.’ Finally, Gregory associates pity closely with love or *agapḗ*, and describes pity as an ‘intensification of a loving disposition (‘ἐπίτασις [...] τῆς ἀγαπητικῆς διαθέσεως’) mixed together with a feeling of distress.’ As Gregory observes, since love is the best thing in life, and pity is a magnification of love, then those who experience pity are truly blessed and achieve the height of virtue. It is easy to see how far we have come from Aristotle’s rather more aristocratic conception of pity.

If the emotions in any given society are subject to the influence of its deepest values and institutions, it should come as no surprise that attitudes toward gender too, and no doubt class as well, should play a crucial role in their determination. And yet, in the history of emotions, this dimension has been largely neglected, and the volume before you is the first focused attempt to examine the emotions of the Byzantine world from this perspective. Sometimes, in the service of maintaining social hierarchies, an emotion will simply be denied to certain groups. An example is the extreme reticence in classical Latin literature to ascribe



the feeling of shame to slaves, as Robert Kaster has demonstrated.<sup>1</sup> So too, women may be said to lack courage and the kind of fear that accompanies it; as Mati Meyer writes in this volume, ‘as it was associated with a courageous person, fear was usually male gendered, and was generally mentioned in connection with military acts or devotional practices.’ Passionate love or *erôs* was another asymmetrical emotion: men were typically regarded as lovers or *erastai*, that is, the subjects of erotic attraction, whereas women were imagined as the objects of male passion, that is, as *erômenai*. Anger too was unevenly distributed between males and females. And yet, just here we see clearly how socially prescribed constraints fail to erase the fact that men and women (of all classes, we may add) equally share the same emotions, despite the efforts of men to repress them in women. The recognition of the parity of emotional competence in women frequently manifests itself as an anxiety, in which women who experience anger or sexual desire to the full degree that men do are caricatured and rendered monstrous, as though they were not genuinely female but some kind of freak or villain. In Sophocles’ *Trachiniai*, the heroine Dejanira protests, ‘It is not appropriate (*kalon*) for a sensible woman to be angry’; it is not a lack of capacity that inhibits her but a sense of protocol. So too, although sex may be dangerous to anyone who falls under its sway, women who are possessed by erotic passion are mocked and disparaged as unnatural; Procopius’ account of the debaucheries of Antonina, the wife of Belisarius, may suffice to illustrate the point.

The gendering of emotion persists to this day, even among feminist thinkers who wish to affirm the value of the gentler sentiments that women, confined to domestic life, are imagined to represent. Carol Gilligan, in her influential book, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*,<sup>2</sup> found that women evince a stronger sense of caring for others than men do. That this disparity is due to early socialization is highly plausible, but Gilligan’s position has been the subject of considerable controversy, particularly on the part of those who detected in her argument a genetic basis for the differences. As the chapters in the present volume make abundantly clear, Byzantine writers emphasized and sustained such a gendered dimorphism in the ascription of emotions. But, as we have noted, such ideologically informed discriminations are inherently unstable, as gendered identities are muddled and inverted (think of the complex role of the eunuch, explored in Shaun Tougher’s chapter in this volume). In this way, they expose the social pressure that

is required to maintain them—the work of defining women precisely as emotional, when emotion is conveniently contrasted with reason and self-control, as opposed to the noble fear and righteous rage that is presumed to characterize real men.

But it is time to let the texts, and the scholars who have interpreted them, speak for themselves, as they illustrate in rich abundance the manifold ways of the sexing of emotions in the Byzantine world.

New York, USA

David Konstan  
New York University

## NOTES

1. Robert Kaster, *Emotion, Restraint, and Community in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
2. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

## PREFACE

The emotionally charged *Koimesis of the Virgin* adorning the Church of Panagia Phorbiotissa in Cyprus, which appears on the cover of the present book, would have been just as familiar an image for the Byzantine faithful as it is for today's visitors to the church. To both past and present congregations, it conveys a powerful message of grief and lament over the Virgin's death, emphasised by a dramatic bodily and gestural visual grammar. Whether the men and women partaking in the liturgy, or entering the church for any other devotional reason, would have taken or do take the gender aspects reflected in the spatial division according to each sex into account is a matter of conjecture.

As they are ultimately formed within a given society, emotions can teach us specifically something about gender aspects in Byzantine society and generally about social normative ethics, values, and ideals. Of course, any work on emotions and gender can inform both textual and artistic research and interdisciplinary inquiry. It is thus the goal of the present volume to mine the gender dimensions of emotions and the emotional aspects of gender within Byzantine culture and to suggest possible readings of such instances.

Most of the chapters collected in the present volume were developed from papers delivered during two panels convened by the editors at the 2015 International Medieval Congress in Leeds, UK, entitled "Emotions in Byzantine Culture," the editors' research that centres on emotive and gender issues in Byzantine literature and art, and the work of some established scholars in the volume's fields who kindly agreed to provide

their own contributions. This collection celebrates the current breadth of Byzantine gender studies while at the same time contributing to the emerging field of Byzantine emotion studies. Furthermore, the editors rejoice in the collaborative nature of both disciplines and the range of interests of the various scholars, with contributions from the fields of political and cultural history, philology, literary studies, material culture, and art history. The volume offers the reader an array of perspectives encompassing various sources and media, including historiography, hagiography, theological writings, epistolography, novels, manuscripts, art objects, and illuminated manuscripts. The chapters cover a time span ranging from the early to the late Byzantine historical periods. The volume's diversity is secured by an expanded and enriched exploration of its unifying theme of gendered emotions. The breadth and scope of the collected articles also reflect the ways in which Byzantine gender and emotion have been studied thus far, while at the same time offering novel approaches that challenge established opinions in Byzantine studies.

The editors wish to thank the organisers of the International Medieval Congress at Leeds. We would also like to thank all of the contributors to the volume along with their sponsoring organisations. Concerning the contributors in particular, we are grateful to them for both their insightful and creative essays and their keen response to and support of this project. We would also like to warmly thank Evelyn Grossberg for her admirable editorial work. Our thanks go also to our institutions—the University of Cyprus and the Open University of Israel—which have supported us financially both for travel to the IMC conference and by covering the volume's editorial costs. Last but not least, the editors wish to thank Oliver Dyer for his guidance and help, as well as the volume's anonymous reviewers for their helpful and constructive comments.

Nicosia, Cyprus  
Ra'anana, Israel  
April 2018

Stavroula Constantinou  
Mati Meyer

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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**Shaun Tougher** is a Reader in Ancient History at Cardiff University. He has published extensively on Julian the Apostate, the Macedonian dynasty, and eunuchs. He is also interested in the reception of these subjects.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BHG	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i> , 3 vols., ed. François Halkin (Brussels: Societe des bollandistes, 1957)
CCSG	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca</i>
CFHB	<i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae</i>
CSHB	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae</i>
FC	<i>The Fathers of the Church</i>
GCS	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte</i>
HABES	<i>Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien</i>
LBG	<i>Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität</i> , 2 vols., ed. Erich Trapp with Wolfram Hörandner und Johannes Diethart et al. (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994–2017)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press; London: W. Heinemann, 1912–)
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> (Zürich; München: Artemis, 1981–1999)
LSJ	<i>Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon</i> , online version, Perseus Digital Library—Tufts University, <a href="http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj">http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj</a>
NPNF	<i>A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church</i>
ODB	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , 3 vols., ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)
PG	J.-P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca</i>
PL	J.-P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina</i>
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
SC	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>

- TLG      *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, online version, produced by the Department of Classics, California University at Irvine, <http://www.tlg.uci.edu>
- VitAd    *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 vols., ed. Robert Henry Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913)

As far as Greek names are concerned, we have generally followed the spelling in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. As for Greek terms, we did not follow absolute rules. We have tried, however, to be as consistent as possible. A Greek term is in most cases given first in its English translation and then in Greek or Latin transliteration, within regular brackets. When repeated, the Greek term is transliterated. The list of Abbreviations refers to general sources used throughout the volume. Journal titles are given in full.

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PART I

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# Introduction



# Towards an Approach to Gendered Emotions in Byzantine Culture: An Introduction

*Mati Meyer*

The US presidential elections for 2016 will be remembered not only for the widely unexpected outcome, but also for the gendered emotional distinctiveness each candidate brought to the presidential race. Donald Trump will be recalled for his roaring voice, his often angry facial traits, and energetic body language, bespeaking anger but also strength and manliness.<sup>1</sup> Hillary Clinton's most unforgettable moment will probably turn out to be the emotional address and apology, aka soft and feminine, in the concession speech after losing the presidential seat, 'I'm sorry that we did not win this election...'<sup>2</sup> which points to issues of gender bias and sexism. This observation chimes in with the prevailing emotional stereotype, that is, 'she is emotional, he is not'.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, emotional gender paradigms are and have always been part of human behaviour and culture; what he or she is supposed to feel is based on cultural beliefs and values in respect to masculinity and femininity.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, both candidates' repetitive exposure in the media and their various affects,

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emotions, and moods have drawn attention to the ways in which gender, among other factors, shapes emotions and vice versa: how emotions are shaped through gender.

Similar general processes of gendered constructs of emotions also inform the medieval world and its history.<sup>5</sup> This multi-authored volume represents a first attempt to bring together various disciplines (philology, literary studies, political and cultural history, and history of art) to examine gendered emotions in Byzantine culture,<sup>6</sup> and is designed to significantly contribute to relevant ongoing discussions in Medieval Studies. It will be a corrective to the current lacuna of research, where only a handful of studies acknowledge the strong interconnection between gender and emotion. This research gap is reflected in the online database ‘Bibliography on Gender in Byzantium’, where a search for the term ‘emotion’ yields but two results, with only one of them concerning specifically Byzantine culture.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Byzantine gendered emotions are practically not charted, neither problematised nor for that matter theorised. The current state of Byzantine research is thus perplexing in view of the rich and varied scholarship on the subject, particularly in connection with the Western Middle Ages, that has been generated over the past twenty years.

Byzantine culture, in particular, offers extremely rich material on gendered emotions, which necessitates a thorough investigation. As far as Byzantine literature is concerned, there are genres in which certain emotions are exclusively gendered either male or female. In martyr legends (sixth to fifteenth century), for example, anger is the feeling that defines the male pagan torturer whose horrific violence imposed upon the martyr proves ineffective.<sup>8</sup> Anger is also the emotion that describes the warrior in such epics as *Digenis Akritis* (twelfth century) and the *War of Troy* (thirteenth century).<sup>9</sup> In the latter work, men are mostly defined through anger, whereas women are subject to grief.<sup>10</sup> Shame (*aidos*), on the other hand, appears mostly as a female emotion in historiographical works, such as the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene (twelfth century; *Alex.* 12.3.2–12.3.4; 15.9.1),<sup>11</sup> a work in which the emotions of its female author are prominent.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, men are generally identified as fearless, proud, and brave, whereas women are associated with excessive expressions of grief, unbridled joy, and merriment.

Furthermore, in texts where certain emotions are shared by both male and female characters, their manifestations are often gender-specific. A case in point is grief. The ‘womanish manner’ of performing sorrow

includes loud lamentation, the tearing out of hair, the disfigurement of cheeks, and the throwing of ashes on the head (*Life of Macrina*, §10.6–10; *Life of Mary the Younger*, §4).<sup>13</sup> The sorrow of Gregory of Nyssa (335–c. 394) over the death of his sister Macrina, in contrast, is not expressed in gestures and bodily reactions, but is experienced intellectually. He criticises Macrina’s nuns, who burst into loud lamentations thus revealing a feminine and, accordingly, a weak character (*Life of Macrina*, §26–27). Yet, one can encounter instances of emotional gender shifts. Suffice it to mention an author of the fifth century, Synesios of Cyrene, who in a letter addressed to his friend Herculianos constructs his own identity in feminine terms: ‘While wanting to make virile your holy soul [...], I myself became more feminine’.<sup>14</sup> Synesios uses gender transformation to express his pleasure at the charms of the Homeric sirens and to flatter his friend.<sup>15</sup>

Likewise, Byzantine art harbours a plethora of images presenting manifold emotional expressions by both male and female figures. In Christological scenes associated with the Passion of Christ and his death, which decorate many churches, particularly from the twelfth century onwards, the emotive value of Christian history is usually displayed through female figures sketching dramatic and even violent gestures of grief and by emphatic and exaggerated facial expressions. However, most of the images that can yield insights into emotional expressions regarding gender in Byzantine art can be found earlier in the monumental media of mosaic and wall paintings, and most particularly in the ‘unofficial’ art of small objects and illuminated manuscripts.<sup>16</sup> In spite of what may appear at first glance as near immobility and placid facial expressions of the figures and the fact that gestures are not dramatic, images can still reveal inner emotional states. Evocative of emotional gender distinctiveness are the Schechemites, whose facial expressions and bodily gestures convey the mental agony and physical pain they experienced during the forced circumcision they underwent at the hands of one of Jacob’s sons.<sup>17</sup>

Another example is the figure of Auge being sexually coerced by Herakles as carved on the tenth-century Darmstadt ivory box; her emotional reluctance to accept the act is expressed through her particular bodily pose: she turns away from him.<sup>18</sup> One can also find signs in art of emotions shared by both sexes. The gender blending of emotions is visualised, for example, in the representations of female and male martyrs experiencing the excruciating pain of their tortures, which may be



visibly inscribed on their faces, articulated through the recurring motif of the inverted “V” eyebrows, as seen in the portrayals of Anastasia the Younger and some of the male companions of Saint Varos.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the gentle cheek-to-cheek kiss Joachim and Anna exchange at their meeting at the outskirts of Jerusalem evinces a mutual mood of tenderness, their joy being expressed by dynamic bodily movements.<sup>20</sup>

As this short list of textual and visual material—which could be immensely extended—shows, the Byzantines, like their Western counterparts, were preoccupied with questions of emotions both in relation to their inner selves and their capacity to convey those emotions to others.<sup>21</sup> It is this kind of material, as well as many other sources that leads to the central twofold question that informs this volume: how did gender determine feeling and vice versa: how was emotion determined by gender in Byzantium? Other, related questions include the following: In what ways were Byzantine emotions gendered, and what was their specific nature? How did emotions define Byzantine masculinity and femininity? In what contexts and under what circumstances did gendered emotions emerge? What kind of emotional patterns can we detect in gendered individuals or groups? To what extent are these patterns performative? What were the male and female experiences of emotions? How is gender blending reflected in emotions, and how do emotions determine gender blending? To what extent did gendered emotions validate or violate social rules? How did they determine social, religious, and political relationships? In what ways are the rhetoric and bodily language of male and female emotions discernible today? Are emotions conducive in constructing not only gender, but also other identities such as social class, religion, and sexuality? Was the articulation of this or other emotion different in written sources as compared to their visual representations?

Why does it matter to attempt to answer these questions, specifically so in relation to the Byzantine world? Broadly speaking, the physical and mental capacity to experience emotions is universal. Feelings are forceful agents in men’s and women’s lives determining their actions and interactions and affecting the ways in which social, religious, intellectual, and other communities are created. Emotions also point to the inclusion or exclusion of an individual from these communities. Hence, emotions have a factual and existential value. Associated with corresponding senses, feelings impose on human beings the very essence of their world.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the examination of gendered emotions in Byzantium

will help us ponder how Byzantines functioned in their social lives, and will reveal their (gender) biases, values, and ideals. Moreover, the critical evaluation of Byzantine gendered emotions will inform both textual and artistic research in an interdisciplinary perspective, which is not often undertaken in Byzantine scholarship.

In short, this collective work has a twofold aim: to bring together in a single volume the fields of gender and emotion in an interdisciplinary approach that combines various texts and works of art from different Byzantine periods and to submit these materials to a critical evaluation drawing on some gender and emotion theories and studies. Through such a method, the volume provides an analytic lens that sheds light on aspects of Byzantine culture that would not otherwise be revealed and thus offers a better understanding of that civilisation.

All in all, this volume combines both religious and nonreligious initial points of departure and targets a whole array of emotions: grief and sorrow, anger and rage, fear, shame, jealousy, desire, love, joy, and passion and dispassion. However, it is important to stress that the collection's breadth is not comprehensive or exhaustive and cannot achieve a broad synthesis of the examined gendered emotions. Rather, it is an attempt to lay the groundwork for ampler documentation and scholarship on the subject and to initiate a first theoretical approach towards an intertwined critical analysis of gendered emotions in Byzantium. The objective is not to claim that the analysis and the discussion offered hereby will teach us how the Byzantines felt in real situations, but to point to the particular emotional states of the human figures that appear in a series of penned and visual works.<sup>23</sup> A brief glimpse into issues of terminology and definition along with the relevant state of research follows.

### EMOTION AND GENDER: THE STATE OF RESEARCH

Plato reasoned that emotion is antithetical and, thus, inferior to reason. Consequently, it has always been discussed in relation to reason. However, in the last four decades emotion has been perceived beyond the Platonian understanding and has become a central and multi ramified subject of research. There is a growing number of studies that examine the origins, influences, definitions, and rhetoric of emotions in a variety of disciplines, including neuroscience, psychology, sociology, economic sciences, philosophy, cultural studies, literary studies, and history.<sup>24</sup> Emotions can be roughly understood from two perspectives: a broad cultural angle,

where emotional states, being tied to specific social classes in particular historical times, are culturally mediated,<sup>25</sup> and as basic ‘internal’ states or motivations, where they are expressed by the individual via action and experience with respect to the environment.<sup>26</sup>

In general, there is a polarisation of emotions in modern scholarship: the notion of the nature/culture dualism advocated in the history of emotions during the eighteenth and nineteenth century or the modern approaches of the dichotomy between universalism and social constructivism.<sup>27</sup> This polarisation implies that emotions are either constant,<sup>28</sup> or, as suggested by Barbara Rosenwein, change over time.<sup>29</sup> Rosenwein’s idea that emotions are not constant across space and time, which is generally accepted by the contributors to the present volume, is largely embraced today and elicits enthusiastic responses. One of its manifestations is the flourishing (since 2014) of research groups and the publication of relevant key volumes, which talk about the ‘emotional turn’ or the ‘affective turn’. Various publications emphasise the difficulties of discussing a changeable history of emotions, and call for a nuanced scrutiny of their manifestations in different times and places.<sup>30</sup>

Related terms such as ‘emotion’, ‘affect’, and ‘mood’ are prevalent in this volume. What do we mean by them? For a long time, psychological studies have attempted to untangle their problematic interchangeability. Although the differences between their constructs are not always clear-cut and their conceptualisation is still debated, scholarship has reached a quasi-consensual system of definition.<sup>31</sup> The broadest and most inclusive term is ‘affect’, which points to ‘valenced states’, including some emotions and moods.<sup>32</sup> Both physical and psychological, affect is experienced along with other elements of consciousness when one interacts with the world; emotion ‘comprises multiple interconnected and coordinated components (e.g. feeling, appraisal, physiology, expression, action)’; emotions ‘are elicited *by* something, are reactions *to* something, and are generally *about* something’. ‘Mood’ differs from ‘emotion’ in duration, frequency, intensity, and pattern of activation.<sup>33</sup> Panteleimon Ekkekakis offers a cogent model of the interrelationship of the three terms according to which ‘core affect is a broader concept than mood and emotion. It [affect] provides the experiential substrate upon which the rich tapestry of moods and emotions is woven’.<sup>34</sup>

Generally, ‘gender’ is a springboard for discussions of questions about how societies fashion ideas regarding what it means to be male or female and how they elucidate questions of sexual identity in its various contexts

in a historically changing and unstable system of racial, social, and cultural differences.<sup>35</sup> As Merry Wiesner-Hanks concludes, in the social perspective, gender is a set of meanings that sexes assume in a particular society. Further, she argues that it ‘is misguided to think that we are studying women (or men, for that matter) as a sex, for the only thing that is in the historical record is gender’.<sup>36</sup>

As the scholarly output on emotions and gender expands, more and more scholars come to realise the need to acknowledge the interrelation of the two fields of study as a new category.<sup>37</sup> Today, it is widely accepted that gender differences in emotional functioning are mediated by socio-cultural, cognitive, biological, and behavioural variables, and serve an array of communicative and motivational functions, varying across personality, society, culture, and situation.<sup>38</sup> The exponential and still growing body of knowledge on gender suggests that modes of emotional expression can reveal attitudes and social values, among others, and also point to social conventions and to how individuals or communities conform to or deviate from these conventions.<sup>39</sup>

What is the place of Byzantine studies in this picture? It is only of late that Byzantine scholars have turned to the study of emotions. Martin Hinterberger was the first to offer an overview and some helpful introductory remarks on such emotions as joy, sorrow, fear, envy, and anger as detected in Byzantine texts, mainly theological and literary.<sup>40</sup> The winter colloquium of 2014 (December 12–13) that took place at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC, was designed to map the topic as expressed in its title, *Managing Emotion/Emotional: Passion, Emotions, Affects, and Imaginings in Byzantium*.<sup>41</sup> In conjunction with the colloquium, a host of scholars assembled *A Short Working Bibliography for Emotions*.<sup>42</sup> This bibliographical list is actually indicative of the current state of research on Byzantine emotions, since most of the cited publications do not relate to Byzantine studies per se. However, the project entitled *Emotions through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, headed by Douglas Cairn from Edinburg University (UK) promises to be a corrective to this reality. Involving an international group of scholars and interdisciplinary approaches, the project looks at the interactions of emotions in ancient Greek and Byzantine periods.<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to studies on Byzantine emotions, there is a corpus of meaningful scholarship in the field of gender. Scholars related, however sporadically, to gender theories and approaches in Byzantine studies as early as in the 1990s.<sup>44</sup> Notable is Liz James’s collection of essays on

women, men, and eunuchs, which raises questions of gender roles and individual identities. The volume's 'Introduction' and most of its essays have laid the groundwork for future theoretical perceptions in the field.<sup>45</sup> Dormant for nearly a decade, starting in the mid-2000s, the body of studies on Byzantine gender has grown steadily, albeit at a leisure pace, with an increasing number of scholars acknowledging the value of gender theories and approaches in understanding Byzantine society and culture.<sup>46</sup> Examples of relevant key issues and points that draw on gender analysis include: rhetoric and authorship in historical accounts,<sup>47</sup> hagiography,<sup>48</sup> perceptions and presentations of the body,<sup>49</sup> the issue of the so-called 'third gender' or eunuchs,<sup>50</sup> and matters of masculinity.<sup>51</sup> Standing out is the comprehensive and in-depth discussion of masculinity through the perspectives of gender and sexuality in Charis Messis's doctoral thesis.<sup>52</sup> One should also mention Damien Casey's insightful readings of the gendered tensions embedded in the most fundamental elements of the Byzantine society, such as the body and soul duality.<sup>53</sup>

Turning now to the intersections of emotion and gender and in spite of the wealth of sources that yield insights on the subject, as suggested before, one discovers that, in contrast to ancient periods, these are rarely addressed in Byzantine studies.<sup>54</sup> It is only recently that these intersections have been dealt with in any depth, as in the interdisciplinary collected volume edited by Margaret Alexiou and Douglas Cairns, *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and After*, in which the last part of the volume is dedicated to gender.<sup>55</sup> However, beyond that work, two online resources attest to the paucity of research in this domain. The first is the bibliography mentioned above (*A Short Working Bibliography for Emotions*) in which the term 'gender' only features twice, and then not in relation to Byzantium.<sup>56</sup> To illustrate the list's insufficiency on the subject is the conspicuous omission of Stratis Papaioannou's essay on some letters of the eleventh-century historian Michael Psellos, which can be considered an important work on the subject. Papaioannou argues that by consciously adopting a female identity in order to better express his feelings, Psellos constructs a 'femininity' of sorts enabling him as a man to better reflect his complex personality.<sup>57</sup> The essay was later expanded into a book chapter in which the author highlighted the principal argument that Psellos consciously constructed his self-identity upon taking a female rhetorical persona ('Female Voice: Gender and Emotion').<sup>58</sup>

The other resource is the online publication of the abstracts of the Dumbarton Oaks colloquium, also cited earlier ('Managing Emotion: Passion, Emotions, Affects, and Imaginings in Byzantium').<sup>59</sup> Telling is the fact that the term 'gender' appears only in the abstract of Niki Tsironis's presentation, where she plainly tackles the intersection of emotion and gender.<sup>60</sup> In discussing the emotion of grief, Tsironis argues that albeit usually being associated with women, but actually being performed by men, this emotion is not necessarily female. As a result, the binary gendered system in the texts under analysis is porous.<sup>61</sup> In terms of grief in particular, motherly grief in female saints' Lives and female teachings addressed to both men and women about the control of sorrow have been discussed.<sup>62</sup> Further, there have also been some studies on male and female affection in the framework of social relationships, such as friendship and kinship.<sup>63</sup>

Henry Maguire's seminal work on the prevalence of grief and sorrow in Christian iconography is the first to point to gendered emotions in Byzantine art. He argues that these emotions are visually articulated mostly by female protagonists through a variety of poses, gestures and, more particularly, facial expressions.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, he ties the expression of sorrow to both sexes, consequently pointing to the issue of cross-gendering well before it became fashionable.<sup>65</sup> Although few in number, later studies have attempted to specifically link emotion and gender in Byzantine works of art. Nonverbal gestures and signs—looks exchanged between protagonists, hand gestures, bodily posture and movement—have been examined for their value as signals of particular emotional responses among female figures during consensual and non-consensual sexual interactions.<sup>66</sup>

In addition, drawing on a variety of written sources Alicia Walker discusses in a recent publication enjoyment or pleasure (*apolausis*) and its visual manifestation in its personification. Concerning gender in particular, she teams Apolausis's sexualised body in some works of art with the female personification of Ploutos (Wealth) and considers their mutual emotional influence.<sup>67</sup> Worthy of mention is yet another essay by Alicia Walker in which she pursues the investigative line of emotion and gender in art. In the chapter on Aphrodite and Eros in Byzantine works of art, she offers new theoretical and iconographic interpretations on the subject.<sup>68</sup>

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Probably the most critical question in the study of emotions as they were experienced in the past is whether they are understood in the same way today. The historiography of emotions clearly shows that some emotional elements might be universal, but emotional experiences are culturally constructed. However, given that we have no direct access to times gone by or any possibility of observing vanished and traceless emotions, we might be tempted to embrace a ‘presentist’ approach, as labelled by Rosenwein.<sup>69</sup> This method posits the view that feelings are frozen in time from prehistory to the present day. We should, therefore, keep in mind Rosenwein’s caution when we turn to the study of emotions in Byzantine culture. Of help in finding one’s way through the cultural variety in the emotional repertoire of different peoples and periods could be the term ‘emotionology’, which was coined by Peter and Carol Stearns. Differing from the emotions that have a distinct neural and/or hormonal basis, ‘emotionology’ refers to culturally determined rules that govern emotional life and shape the emotional experience of the individual; both rules and experiences can be studied through first-person sources, such as letters and authored texts.<sup>70</sup>

As already suggested, the present volume acknowledges both the changeability of emotions over time and the temporal quality of gender as related to a given socio-cultural nexus, and consequently the need to use the available methodological tools with caution. Thus, we should not use ‘fear’ or ‘love’ in the modern perspective, but rather we should ask what is fear and love and how these words were actually used, commented upon or performed in a Byzantine context and during specific periods.

Another methodological pitfall awaiting the scholar who wants to deal with medieval material, and in this case Byzantine, be it archaeological or visual, is the fact that many materials have come down to us only partially or in a fragmentary form. In such a state, they represent only a fraction of the number that originally existed, and thus do not reflect the whole picture. Also relevant to this issue is the question as to what extent gendered emotions and any ideals attached to them were widespread in Byzantium. In order to avoid this difficulty, the understandings offered in the present volume are based on a careful and cautious reading, analysis, and interpretation of the discussed documents and sources. Thus, one should take care to employ the appropriate vocabulary used

by the men and women of Byzantium and to see the gendered emotions through the Byzantines' own eyes, to paraphrase the title of a book by Robert Taft.<sup>71</sup>

As for artworks, the obstacle for assessing emotions, especially in regard to gender, is nearly insurmountable. One of the main reasons, not specifically tied to gender, is the absence of visible emotions in most of the works of art, where the figures generally present a restrained, unemotional, and immovable façade. This façade may be equivalent to what Rosenwein terms 'silences' in the historical sources, and as she notes, 'Some sources are unemotional in tone and content. These are as important as overtly emotional texts'.<sup>72</sup> What Rosenwein means by 'silences' is that documents which are silent in regard to a given emotion do not necessarily indicate its absence in the culture that produced the documents, but rather a disinclination to speak about this or other emotion. To overcome this obstacle, the investigation of dominant ideals and ideas in Byzantium in primary sources and secondary literature can be helpful.

Another perspective open to the art historian is the investigation of the emotional reception or rejection of a work of art. How can we reconstitute the individual feeling and experience of past audiences? As with other methodological tools, the generalisations we might suggest in regard to Byzantine art should be formulated cautiously. Although images might have little value, if any at all, for analysing the inner lives of the Byzantines, they can reveal something about the artistic vision of gendered emotions by artists and patrons and even the state of mind and the emotional disposition of their audiences. Helpful for understanding the latter point are the signs of the 'barbarism'—erasure, rubbing, scraping, effacing—that were inflicted on numerous works of art.<sup>73</sup> These signs may function as an alternative system for reading emotions such as fear, joy, and anger experienced by the beholder.

This discussion brings us to questions of authorship and audience, which are particularly acute in Byzantium, as many of the figures involved in the production of both the textual and artistic legacy (patrons, donors, writers, artists), remain anonymous, especially so among the non-elite population.<sup>74</sup> As is the case with the great majority of studies on Byzantine culture, this volume draws on material commissioned and made essentially for a cultivated, upper class—aristocratic, imperial, and ecclesiastical (including monastic) audience—consequently reflecting mostly elite perspectives, rather than those of the common people. Furthermore, the individuals who were responsible for the



production, communication, and elaboration of documents and sources regarding emotions were primarily men, so in all likelihood, we are left dealing with somewhat unbalanced textual and visual approaches and formulations.

To further muddy the waters, in Byzantium, as today, first-hand accounts of individuals' emotions are not necessarily raw or unmediated; they are refracted through a myriad of personal and broad cultural filters, including individual choices and preferences, conscious or unconscious attempts to shape a certain self in regard to one's close milieu. Another factor to be considered is the specific identity of the authors or artists, the patrons, and the intended addressees. Consequently and regrettably, in some cases, the only path open to the scholar is to phrase his or her understandings in a general rather than in a specific manner, with all the dangers that generalisations may entail. Lastly, the anonymity of many of the available sources, both textual and visual, and the lack of information about their specific addressees renders the issue of gendered emotions much more complicated. This reality is especially acute in works of art, where our evidence regarding artists and patrons is particularly scanty.<sup>75</sup>

Other pertinent questions are the following: Do written sources differ in the approach we should embrace from that of visual documents and works of art? Are there recurrent paradigms that can be used in both cases?<sup>76</sup> The articulation of these questions reveals that this collection of chapters does not embrace a common methodology. Indeed, it is almost impossible to codify the discussion of different source materials, and consequently the different methodologies undertaken by the authors—patristic literature, hagiography, homiletics, novels, consolation literature, epistolography, advice literature and legal documents, linguistic expression, and multiple media (mainly objects and illuminated manuscripts).<sup>77</sup> Thus, the present volume cannot but discuss the contribution of each medium to the study of emotions and gender according to the particular methodological approach adopted by each contributor.

## STRUCTURE OF THE VOLUME

The short survey of scholarship given above shows the need for a conjoint study of the categorisation of emotions and their gendered performances in Byzantine culture, the very subject of this collection. This volume takes as its starting point the concern with emotional experiences and responses of the individual and individuals in interaction, as well as

collective behaviour in their cultural, social, religious, historical, literary, and art-historical dimensions. The chapters address questions concerning the Byzantine acknowledgement of the ways emotions were gendered and performed, their literary depiction and their rhetorics; how gender determined feelings and how emotions were determined by gender; the use of emotions in constructing not only gender, but also class, religious, and sexual identities. Furthermore, this collection builds on the understanding that the gendering of emotions is detected in religious and secular sources. In both instances, gendered emotions reflected the values of contemporary Byzantine society and the inherent culture of the individuals who produced them.

Of course, tracing all the emotions and the ways in which they were gendered in Byzantine culture would be both methodologically and practically infeasible, and it is in any case beyond the scope of this volume. In an attempt to avoid the potential danger of the chapters being read with little relation to one another, and the fact that ultimately the authors employ their own research tools, as well as in order to achieve cohesion of sorts, the volume is structured according to an ‘interactional paradigm’, or the key term ‘communication’.<sup>78</sup> More specifically, excluding the Introduction and the Conclusions, the chapters are organised into three conceptual and thematic clusters. By and large, the chapters of each group are arranged via analyses of verbal descriptions of emotional practices and experiences, followed by nonverbal emotional behaviours and expressions or affective states observable in art. Moreover, within each group, the chapters appear in a descending order—from a larger corpus of texts to the examination of particular cases.

The first cluster treats primarily with expressions of grief and lament, as performed by men, women, and eunuchs (Andreou, Neville, and Tougher). The second group deals with the issue of women experiencing specific emotions, usually in relation to men—anger and dispassion (Georgiou and Cantone, respectively). The last set of chapters discusses the problematisation of the notions of love and desire in Byzantine literature (Messis and Nilsson) and their visual expressions in art objects and illuminated manuscripts (Angelova and Meyer).

Finally, it should be pointed out that some emotions, such as shame, fear, and love, may overlap throughout the volume. Another notable feature is the fact that the discussions devoted to the analysis of sources and documents outnumber those concerned with art (five to three chapters), which reflects the state of research on both emotions and gender in

Byzantine studies. Even though a discussion of the reasons for this reality would be constructive, it lies beyond the scope of the present volume.

## CHAPTERS

It may be that beliefs regarding emotions are generally gender-specific shaped by an array of social and cultural perceptions and expectations, as was especially the case in patriarchal Byzantium. Indeed, in daily life, it appears that men had more difficulty in coping with what might have been considered female emotionality and, vice versa, women had to muster all their forces to show manly emotional restraint. Building on Judith Butler's gender performative theory, Andria Andreou discusses the similar and divergent ways men and women might have experienced one and the same event emotionally. Her study focuses on two hagiographical texts: the *Life of Andronikos and Athanasia* (BHG 123a) and the *Passion of Adrianos and Natalia* (BHG 29). She shows how in instances such as affection for one's child or spouse or the death of a family member, the emotional expressions and behaviour of married couples can be characterised as gender-specific—female emotionality versus male emotional suppression. However, on other occasions, both men and women reacted in ways that counter gender-specific behaviour. She argues that, for example, in choosing to give up daily married life in favour of retreating to a monastery, women may have transgressed their gender in terms of behaviour; they suppressed such emotions as affection and grief and chose to act in a manly dispassionate manner. Andreou also reveals the narrative and ideological mechanisms of the range of emotions evinced by the protagonists of hagiography. These emotions can be understood as creating the driving force that unravelled the plot to the Byzantine readership, constructed the holy identities of the protagonists, and also served as a method for unearthing the ways in which hagiographers orchestrated their protagonists' relationships—with each other and with the Divine.

Leonora Neville undertakes a further comparative study of the treatment of grief and lament in Byzantine writing and its gendering. She argues that emotions constructed as rhetoric props help to adjust the balance of power between author and audience. She turns to historical narrations of both John Kaminiates's *The Capture of Thessalonike* and Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* and raises the question as to what extent the display and restraint of emotion play a significant role in establishing the

character and the gender of the narrator. The analysis of these historical works shows how despite the situational gender inversion—Anna empowered and masculinised through her writing and John disempowered and feminised by being taken captive—both protagonists attempted to create a positive persona in their accounts. Neville demonstrates that by way of rhetorically resorting to gender ideals that were in play in Byzantine culture—strong men resisted *pathos* and women were naturally subjected to it—they could mitigate the impact of a strong (female) or weak (male) authorial persona on the readership.

The expression of emotions could operate to construct specific gender identities in instances where those identities were fluid from a social perspective. A case in point is that of Byzantine eunuchs who did not fit into well-defined categories. Through a discussion of grief, Shaun Tougher shows how in spite of the fact that eunuchs defy absolute categorisations, they comprise a valuable sexual and social group that can be mined for the intersection of emotion and gender. He demonstrates that all sorts of intensive emotional bonds between eunuchs and their same-sex partners can serve as valuable venues both for analysing questions of eunuchs' gender identity and for shedding light on the reality of the lives they lived in Byzantium.

Andriani Georgiou shows that it is a mistake to assume that particular emotions were solely gender-specific. In a first discussion of its own, she demonstrates that 'anger', which was frequently associated with Byzantine rulers and thus stereotyped as a manly emotion, can also be viewed from a female perspective. She grounds her argument on literary sources that document the deeds of empresses, thus offering a new perception of the subject. The historical figures featured in her chapter are Aelia Eudoxia (395–404), Theodora (527–548), and Eirene (775–802). Discussing the rhetorical ways their anger—justifiable or not—was constructed and perceived, she argues that their stories demonstrate the two contradictory elements that Byzantine society had to deal with when addressing empresses: their status as women and their positions as rulers. As she rightly observes, the communication of the anger that the empresses under discussion felt and expressed was shaped essentially through the gender authorial identity and prism of the writers—all male—and the patriarchal nature of Byzantine society. Thus, the expression of anger on the part of empresses was forcefully dictated by the social, cultural, religious, and, in these cases, imperial expectations, resulting unsurprisingly in the male gendering of this emotion.

In her analysis of some female figures in the so-called *Menologion of Basil II*, Valentina Cantone shows that the appearance of female martyrs considered as ‘male’ in visual arts is further testimony to the popularity of this topos since the early days of Christianity. Her central premise is that the ‘male’ construction of the female figures is particularly evident in the cases of the virgin martyrs, whose crossed-gender identity is conceptually and visually constructed through a series of devices. The gender identity of the female body is either kept through the correspondent sexual markers or blurred by adopting male characteristics, such as evident musculature. The female body might also have acquired manly associations through the visual association with the Crucifixion. Moreover, being combatants along with male martyrs in the struggle (*athletis*) for the Christian faith, female martyrs bravely, and therefore manly, accepted their deaths at pagans’ hands, suppressing all emotional expression (*ataraxia*). At the end of the day, these female figures shared a rhetorical role with the male martyrs; as visual counterparts of hagiographical texts, they functioned as pictorial topoi, theatrically arranged to stir emotive and empathetic responses from the readership.

Love is a prime mover of human emotions, one that can elicit diverse responses from both men and women, either as participants or witnesses. Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson’s contribution offers for the first time a theorised and thematised introductory study of desire (*eros*), affectionate love (*agapē*), and the physiology of love in Byzantine culture. Through an array of textual sources, they show how authors capitalised on ancient Greek theories of emotivity that were subsequently incorporated into the Byzantine tradition. They argue for three Byzantine approaches to eroticism that hover between accepted notions of ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ emotions. The authors posit the notion that the gendering process of love can be categorised as an external force that imposes itself upon individuals, expressed primarily in the novel, but also in hagiography and historiography; as a marital discourse where love is more of an internal feeling rather than an external emotion; and, finally, as a medical phenomenon, truly a physical urge, thus removing emotion from the equation, or in their words, ‘de-emotionalizing Eros’.

Byzantine artists could also introduce complex layers of gender readings on the topic of love (*eros*), as Diliانا Angelova scrupulously demonstrates in connection with the well-known and much-studied Veroli box, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Combining art-historical and textual analyses, she sheds new light on the iconographic

programme and provides new interpretations of the images. Rather than seeing the visual programme of this work of art as simply a luxury object, she argues that the box offers testimony for the enduring relevance of the pagan gods and figures in Byzantine amatory art and literature in the expression of erotic feelings and their gendering; these emotions are channelled primarily through notions of couples and marriage. The potency of the erotic ideas was ensured by the dearth of Christian exempla of passionate love, the enchantment of the classical artistic and literary tradition, especially in articulating erotic feelings, the centuries-old traditions surrounding marriage gifts, and the habit of allegory.

If in the previous chapter love (*eros*) functioned in a positive perspective, in other visual discourses, it was possibly viewed in a sundry light—both positive and negative—as Mati Meyer demonstrates in her analysis of several female biblical figures (Eve, Delilah, and Judith) in illustrated manuscripts. She argues that a presumed overwhelmingly male, otherwise unknown readership gazing at a desirable female body might have experienced an amalgam of sexual desire (*epithymia*) and fears of emasculation, resulting in a mixed emotional response—pleasure coupled with shame and fear. Moreover, the emotionally distressing experience, in turn, probably entailed a feeling of anger. The tell-tale evidence of the latter emotion is seen in the signs of a gendered ‘barbarism’—erasure, rubbing, scrapping, and effacing—that defaced the images in question. Through sensorial experience (sight and touch), the ‘manly’ intervention might have simultaneously activated the memory of the now obliterated image, thus loudly announcing its ‘presence’ in the reader’s imagination (*phantasia*), arousing him all the more. Meyer suggests that the erasures of female figures in illustrated manuscripts reflect ingrained societal Byzantine notions associating women with the disruptive and unsettling erotic power that was perceived as a threat to manliness (*andreia*) and the consequential need to maintain the gender-hierarchical order.

The response of Stavroula Constantinou wraps up the principal themes of the volume and rounds out the discussions. Her discussion draws together themes raised in earlier scholarship dealing with the intersection of emotion and gender. Central to her argument is the work of Barbara Rosenwein, the pioneer scholar in the field of medieval emotions. Rosenwein points out in the concluding remarks in her book *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (1998) that gender is a useful category of analysis and highlights the need to

adopt a gender perspective in studies of medieval emotion. Constantinou discusses the way the chapters included in the present volume foster the validity of Rosenwein's statements, but also points out that as far as Byzantium is concerned, the present collection constitutes the first systematic attempt to approach emotion from a gendered perspective. By using as a case study the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, she enlarges upon the volume's twofold thematic—how gender determines feelings and how emotion is determined by gender—and she suggests further avenues of approach. In so doing, she shows how the category of gender offers a better understanding of Byzantine emotions and how those emotions in turn can illuminate the question of gender in Byzantium.

Our understanding of the ways emotion and gender are interrelated in Byzantine culture—with its multifaceted ideological and visual inferences—is still in its infancy and the chapters in the present volume are attempts to establish a more systematic approach in the field. Albeit that they deal with specific textual and visual materials, most of them discuss the rhetoric and performative mechanisms that Byzantine writers and artists tailored to stimulate emotional responses in regard to specific individuals and or 'emotional communities', and reveal the ways in which a Byzantine audience might have engaged with the material discussed. These chapters also relate to the consideration of the construction of a gendered identity—individual or communal—and the role emotions play in creating and reinforcing this very identity. This collection is designed to pave the way for further discussions of emotion and gender in Byzantine Studies and broaden the interdisciplinary dialogue on its variegated, still undiscovered, meanings.

## NOTES

1. These observations draw on the presidential election debates held during the fall of 2016: September 26 at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY; October 9 at Washington University, St. Louis; October 19 at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas.
2. Jen Wiczner, 'Hillary Clinton Is the First to Say "I'm Sorry" in a Presidential Concession Speech', *Fortune*, November 14, 2016, <http://fortune.com/2016/11/14/hillary-clinton-concession-speech-sorry-hal-lelujah/>, accessed 28.1.2017.
3. Stephanie A. Shields, *Speaking from the Heart: Gender and the Social Meaning of Emotion* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3.

4. On the cultural-psychological assumption that women are more emotional than men, see, for example, Stephanie A. Shields, 'Thinking About Gender, Thinking About Theory: Gender and Emotional Experience', in *Gender and Emotion: Social Psychological Perspectives*, ed. Agneta Fischer (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2000), 3–23. For an up-to-date assessment of the topic, see Leslie R. Brody and Judith A. Hall, 'Gender and Emotion in Context', in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2008; 3rd ed., 2010), 359–408. However, this view is not unanimous. For example, Kathryn Dindia posits that there are more sex–gender similarities than differences as regards emotions, and when there are differences, in general, they are small; Daniel J. Canary and Kathryn Dindia (eds.), *Sex Differences and Similarities in Communication* (New York and London: Taylor & Francis, 2006; 2nd eBook, 2009), 3–18. It is important to point out that already around the middle of the twentieth century, Simone de Beauvoir has claimed that gender-specific norms on emotional experience and expression have been a standard means of maintaining inequality among the sexes in many cultures; Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949); *The Second Sex*, trans. Howard M. Parshley (London: Vintage, 1997), 171–229.
5. For relevant studies, see, for example, Michael Champion and Andrew Lynch, *Understanding Emotions in Early Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Cultures* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2009); Kathryn Starkey, 'Performative Emotion and the Politics of Gender in the *Nibelungenlied*', in *Women and Medieval Epic: Gender, Genre, and the Limits of Epic Masculinity*, ed. Sara S. Poor and Jane K. Schulman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 253–71; Stephanie Trigg, 'Langland's Tears: Poetry, Emotion, and Mouvance', *The Yearbook of Langland Studies* 26 (2012): 27–48; Jennifer C. Vaught and Lynne Dickson Bruckner (eds.), *Grief and Gender 700–1700* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
6. Here, we use 'culture' and 'cultural' in the sense of 'the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively', and relating to 'the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a society', as defined by *Oxford Living Dictionaries*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/culture>; <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/cultural>, accessed 28.12.2016.
7. The database, which is hosted by the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, is an update of the former 'Bibliography on Women in



- Byzantium', initiated by late Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Alice-Mary Talbot, [www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/women\\_in\\_byzantium.html](http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/women_in_byzantium.html), accessed 15.12.2016.
8. See Stavroula Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances: Reading the Body in Byzantine Passions and Lives of Holy Women*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 9 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2005), 19–52, and eadem, 'The Saint's Two Bodies: Sensibility Under Self-Torture in Byzantine Hagiography', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 66 (2015): 285–320.
  9. See Stavroula Constantinou, 'Angry Warriors in the Byzantine War of Troy', in *Emotions Through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Douglas L. Cairns et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), forthcoming.
  10. See Stavroula Constantinou, 'Homosocial Desire in the War of Troy: Between (Wo)Men', in *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance: A Handbook*, ed. Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 251–67.
  11. *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether R. Reinsch and Athanasios Kamblylis, *CFHB* 40.1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001).
  12. For the emotionality of Anna Komnene, see Leonora Neville's contribution in this volume, as well as eadem, 'Lamentation, History, and Female Authorship in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* (2013): 192–18; eadem, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
  13. *Grégoire de Nyse, Vie de sainte Macrine*, ed. Pierre Maraval, *SC* 178 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971) and *Acta Sanctorum Novembris* 4: 692–705; for a comparative discussion of the two texts (*Life of Macrina* and *Life of Mary the Younger*), see Stavroula Constantinou, 'A Byzantine Hagiographical Parody: The *Life of Mary the Younger*', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 34/2 (2010): 160–81.
  14. Engl. trans. in Stratis Papaioannou, 'Michael Psellos' Rhetorical Gender', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 24 (2000): 134.
  15. *Ibid.*, 135.
  16. On the discussion of the unofficial art, characterised mainly by innovation, nudity, sexuality and abandon, see Henry Maguire, 'Unofficial Art and the Resistance to Orthodoxy', in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 321–33.
  17. *Octateuch*, Constantinople, 11th century, Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 747, fol. 56v; Kurt Weitzmann and Masimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, *The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint 2* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 111, Fig. 446.
  18. Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt (inv. no. 33.36); Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XIII. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Deutscher

- Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1930–1934; repr. 1979), 1: 66–67 (no. 125), pl. LXXVI, b. Alicia Walker challenges the traditional dating of the casket to the mid-tenth century, and places it instead in the twelfth century; ‘Exotic Elements in Middle Byzantine Secular Art and Aesthetics: 843–1204 CE,’ unpublished PhD thesis (Harvard University, 2004), 332–33.
19. *Menologion of Basil II*, Constantinople, 1001–1016, Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 1613, pages 138 and 264; Franchi P. Cavalieri (ed.), *Il menologio di Basilio II (cod. vaticano greco 1613)* (Torino–Roma: Fratelli Bocca, 1907), 71–72, respectively. See also Valentina Cantone’s essay in this volume.
  20. *Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos*, Constantinople, 12th century, Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 1162, fol. 16r; Cosimo Stornajolo, *Miniature delle Omilie di Giacomo Monaco (Cod. Vatic. Gr. 1162) e dell’Evangelionario Greco Urbinate (Cod. Vatic. Urbin. Gr. 2)*, *Codices e Vaticanis selecti*, Series minor I (Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1910), Fig. 6.
  21. For emotions in medieval Western cultures, see, for example, Lazikani Ayoush, *Cultivating the Heart: Feeling and Emotion in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Religious Texts* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015); Jorgensen Alice, Frances McCormack, and Jonathan Wilcox (eds.), *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015); Peter King, ‘Emotions in Medieval Thought’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 167–88; Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006). For Byzantine emotions, see Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Martin Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 123–34; idem, *Pthonos: Mißgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur*, *Serta Graeca/Beiträge zur Erforschung griechischer Texte* 29 (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2013).
  22. Alphonso Lingis, ‘The Sensuality and the Sensitivity’, in *Face to Face with Levinas*, ed. Richard H. Cohen (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 220.
  23. A close understanding is articulated in Angelos Chaniotis (ed.), *Unveiling Emotions: Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World*, HABES 52 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), 9: ‘[the]

- representation and manifestation [of emotions and feelings] in the sources material [...] is determined by cultural and social parameters’.
24. Research on emotions is extremely large and it takes off in all fields and directions. A useful up-to-date survey of main ideas and trends in scholarship is provided by Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*, trans. Keith Tribe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Worth of note are also the following studies: Keith Oatley and Jennifer M. Jenkins, *Understanding Emotions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Robert Solomon, *Thinking About Feeling: Contemporary Philosophers on Emotions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). For the social-historical variety of emotions see, e.g. Rom Harré, ‘An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint’, in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. idem (New York: Blackwell, 1986), 2–14. For a conceptual model approaching the understanding of emotions over time and across cultures, see, for example, Lisa Barrett Feldman, ‘Variety Is the Spice of Life: A Psychologist Constructionist Approach to Understanding Variability in Emotion’, *Cognition & Emotion* 23 (2009): 1284–1306, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930902985894>.
  25. See, for example, Anne-Charlott Trepp, ‘Gefühl oder kulturelle Konstruktion? Berlegungen zur Geschichte der Emotionen’, *Querelles: Jahrbuch für Frauenforschung* 7 (2002): 86–103.
  26. Harke A. Bosma and Saskia E. Kunnen (eds.), *Identity and Emotion: Development Through Self-Organization* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’homme, 2005), 94.
  27. For a critical assessment of the dual approach in contemporary scholarship, see Plamper, *The History of Emotions*.
  28. See, for example, the argument that human emotions and other emotive responses are a constant form from prehistory to our days: Keith Oatley, *Emotions: A Brief History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), ch. 2, esp. 28–29. For similar theoretical premises, see the hypothesis ‘that particular facial behaviours are universally associated with particular emotions’ in Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen, ‘Constants Across Cultures in the Face and Emotion’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 17/2 (1971): 124–29 (at 128).
  29. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities* and eadem, ‘Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions’, *Passions in Context* 1 (2010): 3–5. See also, eadem, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions 600–1700* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015); eadem, ‘Worrying About Emotions in History’, *The American Historical Review* 107/3 (2002): 821–45, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/107.3.821>. It has to be pointed out that Rosenwein’s idea of emotions changing across culture

and social life is earlier implicated in Lucien Febvre's observation that 'Any attempt to reconstitute the emotional life of a given period is a task that is at one and the same time extremely attractive and frightfully difficult'; Lucien Febvre, 'Sensibility and History How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past', in *A New Kind of History from the Writings of Febvre*, ed. Peter Burke, trans. Keith Folca (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 19.

30. A notable study following this understanding is the edited volume of Susan J. Matt, and Peter N. Stearns, *Doing Emotions History* (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2014), especially the Introduction, 1–14. Probably, the most comprehensive research project aiming to investigate emotions during medieval times in regard to various humanities and social fields is EMMA (Les Émotions au Moyen Âge), a research group established in 2006 by Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy, <http://emma.hypotheses.org/>, accessed 3.1.2017. Also, attesting to the 'emotions' scholarly boom are the ten volumes on the topic published between 2014 and 2017 in *Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions* edited conjointly by David Lemmings and William M. Reddy, <https://www.palgrave.com/us/series/14584>, accessed 3.1.2017. Important work on the history of emotions is also done by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, <http://www.historyofemotions.org.au>, accessed 30.1.2017. Worth of mention for the study of emotions in contemporary times is the Centre for the History of Emotions in Berlin headed by Ute Prevert, <https://www.mpib-berlin.mpg.de/en/research/history-of-emotions>, accessed 3.1.2017. The project has yielded a collected volume edited by Ute Frevert et al., *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling 1700–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
31. A useful summary of the scholarship and conceptualisation of the terms is provided in Panteleimon Ekkekakis, *The Measurement of Affect, Mood, and Emotion: A Guide for Health-Behavioral Research* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 33–51.
32. Plamper opts to use 'emotion' and 'feeling' interchangeably, and he treats emotion or feeling as the largest and most inclusive category. As for 'affect', he is reticent to use the term as a meta-concept because of its current understanding mainly in neurosciences and linguistics, presuming a lack of consciousness; *History of Emotions*, 11–12.
33. Ekkekakis, *The Measurement of Affect*, 41, 42, 35, respectively.
34. *Ibid.*, 40, Fig. 2.1.
35. 'Gender' as a critical term and its place in various disciplines is a well-trodden path, and the outline of the history of its scholarship is beyond our aim. For a useful introduction to the topic, see Anne Cranny-Francis

- et al., *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Amy S. Wharton, *The Sociology of Gender: An Introduction to Theory and Research* (Chichester, West Sussex and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).
36. Merry Wiesner-Hanks (ed.), *Gender in History: Global Perspectives* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, 2nd ed.), 3. See also, eadem, 'Gender Theory and the Study of Early-Modern Europe', in *Practices of Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Megan Cassidy-Welch and Peter Sherlock (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008). As for some work on medieval gender, see, for instance, the following studies: Leslie Brubaker and Julia M.H. Smith (eds.), *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Liz James, 'Men, Women, Eunuchs: Gender, Sex, and Power', in *A Social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 31–50; Frederick Kiefer (ed.), *Masculinities and Femininities in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010); Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (eds.), *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
  37. The literature on this topic is vast. A groundbreaking study is Arlie Hochschild's normative theory about emotion presupposing differences in feelings and expressive behaviour that are consistent with gender-specific emotion beliefs: 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure', *American Journal of Sociology* 85/3 (1979): 551–75; eadem 'Power, Status and Emotion', *Contemporary Sociology* 10/1 (1981): 73–77. See also the useful survey of psychology's approach to sex differences in emotion, Abigail Locke, 'The Social Psychologising of Emotion and Gender', in *Sexed Sentiments: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Gender and Emotion*, ed. Ruberg Willemijn and Kristine Steenbergh (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), 185–205, esp. 185–94. Locke argues that 'the relationship between emotion and sex is not a psychological one, but rather a societal and cultural construct, with factors like class and ethnicity intersecting with gender' (Locke, 'The Social Psychologising of Emotion and Gender', 190). Also important is the premise that 'perceived gender differences that appear in emotionality can be seen as being due to cultural expectations of emotional expression and long-held stereotypical notions of the "emotional female" and "non-emotional male"' (Locke, 'The Social Psychologising of Emotion and Gender', 191). On the problematisation of the intersection between gender and emotions of value is Fay Bound Alberti, *Medicine, Emotion and Disease, 1700–1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), esp. xiii–xxiv.
  38. Leslie R. Brody and Judith A. Hall, 'Gender and Emotion in Context', in *Handbook of Emotions*, 359–408.

39. For a helpful introduction to this topic, see Matt and Stearns, *Doing Emotions History*, 1–14.
40. Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium?’.
41. Margaret Mullett and Suzan Ashbrook Harvey (eds.) *Managing Emotion: Passions, Affects and Imaginings in Byzantium* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection), forthcoming.
42. [http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/scholarly-activities/managing-emotion-passion-emotions-affects-and-imaginings-in-byzantium/copy\\_of\\_emotionsbiblio.pdf](http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/scholarly-activities/managing-emotion-passion-emotions-affects-and-imaginings-in-byzantium/copy_of_emotionsbiblio.pdf), accessed 3.1.2017.
43. <http://emotions.shca.ed.ac.uk/about/>, accessed 3.1.2017.
44. Interestingly, some prominent handbooks on Byzantium do not have chapters on gender, although they might include entries on women and/or eunuchs: Alexander P. Kazhdan et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Elizabeth Jeffreys, John F. Haldon, and Robin Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); James, *A Companion to Byzantium*.
45. Liz James, *Women, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium* (New York: Routledge, 1997). However, a first step towards gender approaches in Byzantine studies was initiated earlier; see, for example, Catia S. Galatariotou, ‘Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1984–85): 55–94. Worthy of mention is also Paul Halsall’s unpublished dissertation (‘Women’s Bodies, Men’s Souls: Sanctity and Gender in Byzantium’ [Fordham University, 1999]), where he offers meaningful insights into gender processes in saints’ Lives.
46. For example, the database ‘Bibliography on Gender in Byzantium’, mentioned above, note 5. Also of value are the following historiographic surveys: Leslie Brubaker, ‘Gender and Society’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 427–47; Georges Sidéris, who considers generally the development of gender studies from the early twentieth century up to 2008, with a brief detour on the place of gender theory in Byzantine studies, ‘Approches sur l’historiographie du genre à Byzance’, *Genre & Histoire* 3 (2008), <http://genrehistoire.revues.org/358/>, accessed 29.12.2016. For the problematisation of gender in the Byzantine field, see Leena Mari Peltomaa, ‘Gender and Byzantine Studies from the Viewpoint of Methodology’, *Anzeiger der philosophisch-historischen Klasse* 140/1 (2005): 23–44.
47. Papaioannou, ‘Michael Psellos’ Rhetorical Gender’, 133–46; idem, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). See also, Athanasios Markopoulos,

- ‘Gender Issues in Leo the Deacon’, in idem, *History and Literature of Byzantium in the 9th–10th Centuries* (Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), pt. XXIII, 1–16.
48. Stavroula Constantinou, ‘Male Constructions of Female Identities: Authority and Power in the Byzantine Greek Lives of Monastic Foundresses’, in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Lioba Theis et al., *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* LX/LXI (2011/2012) (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2014), 41–60; eadem, ‘Performing Gender in Lay Saints’ Lives’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 38/1 (2014): 24–32; eadem, “‘Il capo della donna è l’uomo’: la *Kyriarchia* e la retorica della subordinazione femminile nella letteratura bizantina”, trans. Lavinia Ceccarelli, in *Donne e Bibbia nel Medioevo, Secoli VI–XII*, vol. 6.1, ed. Franca-Ela Consolino and Judith Herrin (Tripani: Il Pozzo di Giacobbe, 2015), 17–36.
49. Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances*; Kathryn M. Ringrose, ‘The Byzantine Body’, in *Handbook of Women & Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith M. Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 362–78; Mati Meyer, ‘Gender Slippage in the Byzantine Illuminated Book’, *CIHA 2016 Proceedings* (Beijing), forthcoming.
50. Kathryn Ringrose is to be credited for labelling Byzantine eunuchs as a ‘third gender’: ‘Living in the Shadows: Eunuchs and Gender in Byzantium’, in *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, ed. Gilbert Herdt (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 1996), 85–109. Ringrose later expands the question of eunuchs and their gender identity, arguing that they constituted a specific social construction, the third gender: *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). The question of eunuchs is largely problematised in a series of publications authored by another contributor to this volume, Shaun Tougher: *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008). Tougher challenges Ringrose’s terminology of the eunuch as a ‘third gender’ and maintains that the eunuch should be considered as a fluid category between man and woman, consequently not a gender on its own. Concomitantly, he approaches the subject in a comparative way that has opened new vistas for the understanding of eunuchs in Byzantium. The topic of eunuchs has been equally tackled by Georges Sidéris, in his doctoral thesis, ‘Eunuques et pouvoir à Byzance, IVe–VIIe siècle’ (L’Université de Paris I—Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2001). Following Ringrose’s terminology of the ‘third gender’, Sidéris has continued to examine in a series of articles various aspects related to Byzantine eunuchs, see, e.g. ‘Les débats sur l’eunuchité et la nature



- physiologique des eunuques à Byzance (IV<sup>e</sup>–XII<sup>e</sup> siècle)’, in *Féminité et masculinité altérées: transgression et inversion des genres au Moyen Âge*, ed. Eva Pibiri et Fanny Abbott (Firenze: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2017), 145–206. See also Charis Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire* (Paris: Centre d’études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, 2014), where the author queries the symbolism of the eunuch in Byzantine literature, and more specifically its rhetorical constructions.
51. Notable is Leonora Neville’s persuasive argument that the work of Nikephoros Bryennios and the central concern of identity draws on Roman ideals of masculinity and manliness, in *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
  52. Charis Messis, ‘La construction sociale, les réalités rhétoriques et les représentations de l’identité masculine à Byzance’, 2 vols., PhD dissertation (Paris, 2006).
  53. Damien Casey, ‘The Spiritual Valency of Gender in Byzantine Society’, in *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, ed. Neil Bronwen and Lynda Garland (Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 167–81. Even though the title of this volume suggests that it is dedicated to issues of gender, its articles engage only to some extent with the topic.
  54. Delphine Eggel, ‘Gender and Emotion: An Anthropological and Historico-Religious Approach (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Ancient Judaism, Greece, and Rome)’, in *Gender and Emotion/Emotional: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, ed. Latu Ioanna, Marianne Schmid Mast, and Susanne Kaiser (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), 171–79. Recent publications that offer theories, methodological tools and case studies of the conjoint terms include: Douglas L. Cairns and Daniel Nelis (eds.), *Emotions in the Classical World: Methods, Approaches and Directions*, HABES 59 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2017); Chaniotis, *Unveiling Emotions* (2012); Angelos Chaniotis and Pierre Ducrey (eds.), *Unveiling Emotions II. Emotions in Greece and Rome: Texts, Images, Material Culture*, HABES 55 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013); Dana LaCourse Munteanu (ed.), *Emotion, Genre and Gender in Classical Antiquity* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011).
  55. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming.
  56. Above, note 41. In general, volumes dealing with large social and gender questions include only aleatory mentions of emotions. See, for example, Brubaker and Shaun, *Approaches to the Byzantine Family* and Bronwen and Garland, *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*.
  57. Papaioannou, ‘Michael Psellos’ Rhetorical Gender’, 133–46.
  58. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship*, 192–213.



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PART II

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The Gender of Grief



# ‘Emotioning’ Gender: Plotting the Male and the Female in Byzantine Greek Passions and Lives of Holy Couples

*Andria Andreou*

The rich array of emotions that medieval hagiography offers and the correlation of these emotions with gender have recently drawn the attention of a number of Western medievalists,<sup>1</sup> but Byzantinists have shown little interest in these aspects.<sup>2</sup> In an attempt to provide a reading of Byzantine hagiography from the perspective of gendered emotions, the present chapter addresses the implications that gender has for the emotional self of the holy protagonists depicted in Passions and Lives and vice versa: the ways these protagonists’ emotions defined their gender identities.

The emotions that surface in Byzantine hagiographical narratives, such as Passions and Lives, can be roughly divided into two categories: they were linked either to the protagonists’ decisions to give up their former (worldly) lives or to their efforts to orient themselves towards spiritual affairs. The first group involved such emotions as

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inconsolable grief and desperation over one's sins. Feelings of lack and worthlessness against one's holy aspirations became a matter of scrutiny as well. Another popular emotion depicted in these narratives was shame for one's previous lifestyle. Related to shame, there was regret for emotions that an ascetic experienced while indulging in a more material lifestyle (lust, gluttony, arrogance).<sup>3</sup> The second group concerned emotions related to spiritual advancement, such as pleasure (e.g. in studying the Scriptures, praying, and performing God-pleasing acts), as well as feelings such as contempt (e.g. against those who behaved impiously) or excitement (caused by a holy apparition or by practices such as punishment and asceticism, which brought the saint closer to a unity with God).<sup>4</sup>

In general, the emotions depicted in hagiographical narratives were inextricably related to the holy protagonists' divine aspirations. Byzantine hagiographers tended to discard any emotions that were associated with human relationships as, for example, affection for one's companion, especially if this relationship involved an erotic or sexual element such as the bond between spouses. As emotions between spouses in Passions and Lives were practically non-existent or, in the best case, were poorly portrayed in the texts, the study of such emotions in regard to both Western and Byzantine hagiography is likewise absent. There was, however, a group of Passions and Lives in which emotions that derived from this kind of interaction between two protagonists were brought to the fore and problematized. It is to these texts that I turn in my investigation. These particular narratives have as their protagonists a husband and a wife who managed through (or in spite of) their marriage to achieve holiness. Interestingly, the protagonists' gender-specific emotions in these texts were not downplayed, as one might expect; rather, they were employed as narrative devices that bolstered the tales.

For reasons of space, my analysis focuses primarily on two hagiographical texts that are considered together for the first time and include prime examples of gender-specific emotional responses: the *Life of Andronikos and Athanasia* (henceforth: *LAA*; *BHG* 123a) and the *Passion of Adrianos and Natalia* (henceforth: *PAN*; *BHG* 29).<sup>5</sup> The following questions are the bases of my inquiry: How were the protagonists' emotions orchestrated and dealt with in each case? In what ways did the interplay between emotions and gender specify the hierarchical relationship (if any) between the spouses? How was the conflict between more earthly bound emotions and more sacred ones negotiated?

Through these questions, I seek not only to focus on emotions that were not usually studied in *Passions and Lives* (or not usually present in other hagiographical groups of these subgenres), but also to highlight their literary and narrative uses.<sup>6</sup> Specifically, I centre on emotions involved within the spousal relationship itself, such as affection between the spouses, but also on emotions that were part of the broader familial context: for example, how the spouses reacted in the face of tragic events such as the death of their children or how the wife reacted to the death of her husband. The first question constitutes a matter of prime importance and was explored in detail by the hagiographer of the *LAA*, whereas the second was similarly treated extensively in the *PAN*.

### THE TEXTS

The tale of Andronikos and Athanasia is thought to have formed part of a sixth-century hagiographical collection of spiritually edifying stories known as the 'Daniel Cycle'.<sup>7</sup> There are at least three known Byzantine versions of the story. The version I use here is the only one that stands as an autonomous life with its own prologue and is longer than the others. The story is set in Antioch. Andronikos and Athanasia were known as a wealthy and pious couple. After the birth of two children, they decided to abstain from intercourse. Some years later, both children died as a result of a serious illness, leaving Athanasia heartbroken. She kept a vigil in the Church of Saint Ioulianos, where the children were buried, and in a dream saw the saint reprimanding her for her grief. Shaken from her dream, she appealed to Andronikos and convinced him that they should pursue a monastic life together. On their way to find a monastery that would serve as their new home, Andronikos met a monk from Sketis and decided to go with him to the renowned Lavra of Sketis. He left Athanasia behind and afterwards arranged for her to enter the nunnery of Tabennesi in Egypt. Andronikos himself pursued the ascetic lifestyle alongside Daniel, the renowned monk and abbot of Sketis. Twelve years later, Andronikos embarked on a second pilgrimage, this time to the Holy Land. During the journey, he encountered Athanasia disguised as a monk. She recognized her husband but as her appearance had changed significantly, Andronikos did not recognize her. Together, they travelled to Jerusalem and then lived together in the monastery of Oktokaidekaton in Alexandria until Athanasia died. As her body was being prepared for burial, her female identity was revealed, and through

documents that she had kept in her pillow, Andronikos discovered that he had been living with his wife. He died soon after and was buried next to her.

As far as we know, no information concerning the date of composition or the author of the second text in question (*PAN*) has survived.<sup>8</sup> The action takes place in Nicomedia under the reign of Maximian. The firm insistence of a group of Christians on their faith despite the violence inflicted upon them led one of Maximian's soldiers, named Adrianos, to convert. Adrianos suffered gruesome tortures and died a martyr. His body was taken to Constantinople and buried by a pious man. Natalia, his wife, was being forced to marry one of Maximian's dignitaries, but managed to escape before the wedding and travelled to Constantinople, where her husband's body lay, and died there.

The following discussion concerning the emotions of the two couples in question shifts between the axes of kinship and gender. The present study was inspired by Judith Butler's argument that gender and kinship are constructed performatively as a form of doing and not as a form of being.<sup>9</sup> In both the *LAA* and the *PAN*, gender seems to be constructed from the beginning to the end of the text performatively, that is, through the emotional responses assigned to 'male' and 'female' in society. On the one hand, in the *LAA*, kin and gender positions slide into one another as the story unfolds, a process regulated primarily by the protagonists' emotions. In the *PAN*, on the other hand, gender remains a stable category, but kinship is fluid, allowing the protagonists to assume multiple kin positions.

#### ANDRONIKOS AND ATHANASIA

The tale of Andronikos and Athanasia begins by establishing the traditional gender hierarchy, which, as I show, is premised on the protagonists' emotions. That the picture of the couple that was gradually drawn tended to comply with Byzantine societal standards with the man as the head of the household is made clear in the first two paragraphs of the text. Andronikos is referred to first as 'remarkable' and 'holy', wealthy and pious, generous and humble (*LAA*, p. 249.§1.14–16, p. 249.§2.20–30). Thus, his résumé made him the ideal mate, as in Byzantium being able to provide for one's family and being prestigious and a good Christian were qualifications that made up the profile of the good husband.<sup>10</sup> This is exactly the point at which Athanasia is introduced into



the narrative. Remarkably, she, unlike Andronikos, does not manifest any individual qualities. Instead, she is described as her husband's 'helper towards the good cause' ('βοηθὸς ἐπὶ καλῷ', *LAA*, p. 249.§2.31).<sup>11</sup> The picture of the two protagonists, then, seems to comply with their society's gender taxonomy, with the husband being the principal agent and the wife becoming the husband's helper.<sup>12</sup>

However, the fact that in this text the two protagonists were cast as gender-specific is mostly evident if we turn to the investigation of their emotional reactions. A case in point is the episode in which they were confronted with their children's death, at which time Athanasia's spiritual weakness was made manifest. For unlike other holy heroines such as Melania the Younger, who immediately perceived the demise of her children as a relief from the burden of worldly affairs and seized the chance to undertake the monastic lifestyle,<sup>13</sup> Athanasia, viewed through Butler's theoretical lens, demonstrated a more 'feminine' reaction. She constructed her gendered self through her emotional self, that is, her 'doing' of emotions determined her gendered 'being'.

The episode opens with the little boy and girl falling seriously ill and lying in their bed in pain and Athanasia entering the room. Upon seeing her children in such a state, she was 'worried in her innermost being and was struck violently in the heart' ('εὐθὺς οὖν στρεφομένη τὰ σπλάγχνα καὶ τὴν καρδίαν κοπτομένη δεινῶς', *LAA*, p. 250.§4.67–68).<sup>14</sup> In fact, the phrase 'στρεφομένη τὰ σπλάγχνα' literally means 'having her guts twist', a vigorous physical reaction owing to deep grief. This is a metaphor that uses a very intense image to capture Athanasia's sadness. She was helpless, unable to ease her children's suffering, and became desperate, which was illustrated by the single action she was able to take: she climbed on the bed and laid down next to her children to comfort them. The narrator explained her reaction in the following way:

This would not have been bearable to anyone: to see one's two children worn down by disease, especially to a mother who loves her children so much. For even though the woman was God-loving, she was nevertheless tortured by maternal love and, indeed, by the demands of nature.<sup>15</sup>

καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ ἄλλω τινὶ φορητὸν ἂν ὑπῆρξε, μήτι γε μητρὶ καὶ ταῦτα φιλόπαιδι, τὸ βλέπειν τῇ νόσφ κάμνοντας ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς παῖδας· εἰ γὰρ καὶ φιλόθεος ἦν ἡ γυνή, ἀλλά γε σπλάγχνοις τοῖς μητρικοῖς ἐκόπτετο καὶ αὐταῖς δήπου ταῖς ἀνάγκαις τῆς φύσεως. (*LAA*, p. 250.§4.70–75)

The narrator recognized this as an expected emotional reaction (‘this would not have been bearable to anyone’), nevertheless he cast it as female, as characteristic of a loving mother (‘especially for a mother who loved her children so much’). Hence, Athanasia’s feelings proved her motherhood and thus her attachment to the world, which the hagiographer saw as unfit for a pious person. The clash between the heroine’s spiritual aspirations and her motherly affection was underscored by the syntactical presentation of the authorial remark: ‘εἰ γὰρ καί’, which introduced a clause of concession—understood as ‘even though Athanasia loved God’. This was followed by an antithetical conjunction in stressed form, introducing the main clause (‘ἀλλὰ γέ’) to show the heroine’s submission to her nature.

In what follows, Athanasia, lying on the children’s bed, tried desperately to console them. Overcome by grief, she was wailing and lamenting, thus exhibiting a typical female behaviour, which was in direct contrast to her spiritual vocation.<sup>16</sup> In other words, Athanasia showcased the emotion of grief, which in turn countered her previous God-pleasing character. In short, the heroine seemed to exemplify the Byzantine ideology according to which women were spiritually weaker than men.<sup>17</sup> Hence, according to our author, Athanasia behaved in an improper manner for one who was supposed to be pious, as she allowed her emotions to overwhelm her.

This implicit authorial critique came with a sequel, as the narrator went on to contrast Athanasia’s reaction with that of Andronikos: ‘Andronikos [...], without saying or suffering anything base or gloomy, said only that, “The will of Lord be done”’ (‘ὁ τοίνυν Ἀνδρόνικος [...] οὐδὲν οὖν ἀγεννὲς ἢ σκυθρωπὸν εἰπὼν ἢ παθὼν, τοῦτο μόνον ἐφθέγγετο· τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Κυρίου γενέσθω’; *LAA*, p. 250. §4.75–82).<sup>18</sup> Andronikos was reserved in his reaction, and placed the fate of his children in the hands of God. The lack of emotion was in this case linked directly to his manliness. Being emotionless made him a real man and also proved his love of God. The word ‘ἀγεννὲς’ indicates by contrast that Athanasia’s lamenting was perceived as a base reaction.

The spouses’ contrasting and gendered-based behaviour was also highlighted by Andronikos’s decision to seek divine assistance: he left the house and went to the Church of Saint Ioulianos, where he prayed fervently. When he returned home, he was told that his children had passed away. He maintained an *encratite*, stoic and almost inhumanly serene stance. He left the room and turned to God once again: he went into the

small chapel in the house and fell to the ground praying. He welcomed God's will by expressing his gratitude for the divine grace and then he went to console Athanasia (*LAA*, pp. 250–251. §5.88–114).

The hagiographer judged Andronikos's behaviour positively and deemed his stance comparable to that of the biblical Job ('looking like another Job'<sup>19</sup>; 'ἄλλός τις καθωρᾶτο Ἰώβ', *LAA*, p. 251. §5.92). The hero's serene immobility was once again juxtaposed with the behaviour of Athanasia, who was in a state of total collapse:

Going out, he attempted to plead with his wife who wanted to die with her children, and who could not bear at all to live any longer. For she said, 'Why should I live?' She went on crying and wailing as is natural for a mother who loves her children: 'Both my young shoots have been taken away from me. To whom shall I look from now on, with the help of what shall I extinguish the flame of my grief? I, who had beautiful children, am suddenly childless [...]'. Andronikos tried to support her with imploring words, saying, 'Do not behave so, wife. Do not lament for our children with inappropriate words like this, as if you were one of the foolish (virgins) who had no hope for the Resurrection'.<sup>20</sup>

ἐξελθὼν δέ, παρακαλεῖν ἐπειρᾶτο τὴν βοηθὸν συναποθανεῖν τοῖς τέκνοις ἐφιμεμένην, καὶ μὴ δὲ ζῆν ὅλως ἔτι ἀνεχομένην· 'τί γάρ με δεῖ ζῆν', ἔλεγε· περιπαθὲς τε καὶ γοερὸν ὡς εἰκὸς μητέρα φιλότεκνον ὀλολύζουσα· 'ἄμφοτέρων μοι τῶν κλάδων περιηρημένων; πρὸς τίνα τοῦ λοιποῦ βλέψω; ἐν τίνι δὲ τὸ ζέον καταπαύσω τοῦ πάθους· ἅπαις ἢ καλλίπαις ἐξαίφνης γεγεννημένη'; [...] παρακλητικοῖς λόγοις ὁ θεῖος ἐπειρᾶτο ἀνέχειν Ἀνδρόνικος· 'μὴ οὕτω γύναι' λέγων· 'μὴ κατὰ μίαν τῶν ἀφρόνων καὶ ἀναστάσεως ἐλπίδα μὴ κεκτημένων, ἐκτὸς τοῦ προσήκοντος λόγου ἀποδύρου τὰ τέκνα ἡμῶν'. (*LAA*, pp. 251. §5.97–114)

In contrast, Athanasia's reaction peaked, as not only was she inconsolable, but one could say also hysterical for she could find no reason to live without her children. Compared to her previous state of sorrow, she was now in the throes of extreme grief, which was expressed in an outburst of wailing, sobbing, and crying ('περιπαθὲς τε καὶ γοερὸν [...] ὀλολύζουσα', *LAA*, p. 251. §5.99–100). She perceived her grief as a flame that could not be extinguished, that is, as an overwhelming feeling that could not be controlled. Her unrestrained behaviour was cast by the hagiographer as characteristically female. Andronikos also gave voice to this axiological criticism and told his wife that her reaction placed her among the ten foolish virgins who deprived themselves of God's

kingdom (Matt. 25: 1–13). Obviously, both protagonists were sorrowful but they dealt with their feelings differently: Athanasia in an extremely emotional ‘female’ way and Andronikos in a detached and apathetic ‘male’ way.

As a consequence of their emotional reactions the two protagonists were also placed hierarchically. If we view gender as a doing, then Andronikos performed his male gender through a reserved behaviour. His stoicism in turn was positively commented upon in the text as an attitude that brought the hero closer to God. In contrast, Athanasia countered her previous pious actions by proving herself faithful to her female gender,<sup>21</sup> which classified her as spiritually inferior to her husband.

The two characters’ emotions proved to be the driving forces that moved the plot along, as it was precisely Athanasia’s emotional state that pushed her to spend the night at the Church of Saint Ioulianos, where her children were buried. At this point, another contrast in connection with Athanasia’s and Andronikos’s reactions was made manifest. Whereas Andronikos prayed to God both when the children were sick and after they died, Athanasia only visited the church during the children’s funeral. She remained there after everyone had left, not to pray but rather because she did not want to desert her children and wanted to continue to lament over their deaths. Once again, her motherly feelings overshadowed her role as a believer: ‘Athanasia remained by the tomb of her children, suffering terribly, flowing with hot tears, not accepting any consolation’ (‘ἡ Ἀθανασία δὲ τῷ τάφῳ τῶν τέκνων παρέμεινε, δεινῶς κοπτομένη δάκρυσί τε θερμοῖς περιρροομένη, καὶ μηδεμίαν ὄλως δεχομένη παράκλησιν’; *LAA*, p. 251.§6.123–125).<sup>22</sup> Finally, exhausted by grief, she fell asleep and in a dream saw a monk—later revealed to be the martyr Ioulianos himself. The monk reproached her for her inconsolable grief, reassuring her that the children had passed serenely to the afterlife (*LAA*, pp. 250–252.§6.126–147). Shaken by the dream, Athanasia rushed home and told Andronikos of her desire to lead a solitary life.

Athanasia’s apparently impulsive and unexpected decision was underscored by Andronikos’s reaction to her proposal. Her decisions up to this point were driven by her emotional state, a fact that Andronikos seemed to have realized. Clearly uncertain as to whether Athanasia had given reasonable thought to her decision, Andronikos gave his wife one week to reconsider. Only after being convinced that Athanasia had remained firm

in her decision did Andronikos proceed to make the arrangements for their departure. Thus, it was only after the husband has ascertained that the wife's decision was not based solely on a temporary emotional upset that he agreed to act in accordance with her wishes. In other words, in this case, Athanasia had to prove that she was not overcome by her feeble female emotions, but that she was driven by a desire for godly affairs. Once again, emotions and the protagonists' reflection on each other's emotions seem to have been the driving force behind their actions.

However, when Athanasia started expressing manly emotions, such as calmly resorting to the Divine, she immediately relapsed into her old 'female' self. The author once again highlighted his interest in the emotional world of his characters when he described Athanasia's reaction as she gazed from afar at the house she was about to leave behind:

[T]urning back and seeing all the doors of her own house standing open, Athanasia looked up to Heaven and said with tears, 'O God, [...] lead us forth by the right way [...]. Behold, for the sake of Your holy name we kept our house open to anyone who was in grief [...]'. With these words and many more, the most revered Athanasia prayed to God with flowing tears and left the city with her husband.<sup>23</sup>

ἦτις ἐπιστραφεῖσα καὶ ἀνεωγμένας πάσας ἰδοῦσα τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου τὰς θύρας, τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνατείνασα, 'ὁ Θεός', ἔφη σὺν δάκρυσιν. [...] 'ὀδήγησον ἡμᾶς εἰς ὁδὸν εὐθείαν [...]: ἰδοὺ γὰρ τὸν οἶκον ἡμῶν, διὰ τὸ ὄνομά σου τὸ ἅγιον, ἀνεωγμένον εἰάσαμεν θλιβομένῳ παντὶ [...]'. ταῦτα καὶ πλείω τούτων δάκρυσι περιρροομένη, ἢ σεμνοτάτη Ἀθανασία σὺν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πρὸς Θεὸν εὐξαμένη τὴν πόλιν ἐξέλιπεν. (*LAA*, pp. 252–253, §7–8, 177–191)

The heroine appeared hesitant. Her prayer indicated that, deep in her heart, she had doubts as to whether this sacrifice would earn the couple the reward they longed for, and she was upset and sad. It was not exactly the behaviour one would have expected from a heroine who was finally free of any obligation linked to earthly matters such as bringing up children and was determined to devote herself to God. For instance, after the demise of her two children, the aforementioned Melania rushed to get rid of her vast fortune in order to completely devote herself to divine affairs.<sup>24</sup> Clearly in a dilemma, Athanasia was leaving her fate in God's hands. Moreover, at the beginning and the end of this specific episode, the author reiterated that Athanasia's touching farewell speech to her house and, metonymically, to her previous life, was accompanied by

tears. This was an expression of sadness that once again underscored the fact that she had not yet overcome her female emotional self.<sup>25</sup> At this point in the text, we see a heroine who wavered between her determination to overcome her female self, which was instilled through divine intervention, and her emotional self that was determined to ‘make’ her female.

Athanasia maintained the same attitude a few lines further on when Andronikos expressed his desire to visit the monastery of Sketis, which was closed to women. Remarkably, she did not encourage her husband to take this admittedly beneficial step for his soul’s journey. But what is more, she appeared distressed and upset, begging him to take her with him and ignoring the fact that her reaction might have prevented her husband from going: ‘Athanasia, distressed and in tears, begged her husband to take her with him’ (‘ἡ Ἀθανασία ἐν συνοχῇ καρδίας καὶ δάκρυσι, ἐδεῖτο τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μεθ’ ἑαυτοῦ ταύτην παραλαβεῖν’; *LAA*, p. 253. §8.199–200).<sup>26</sup> This once again impulsive and, one might say capricious, attitude, which disregarded even the *abaton* of Sketis, was in direct contradiction with the virtue of emotional self-restraint (*enkrateia*) that every pious woman was supposed to demonstrate. If gender was constructed performatively according to the argument presented thus far, then, through her emotional outbursts, Athanasia seemed to exaggerate her female gender. It has to be pointed out, however, that the situations in which she exposed her overly strong emotions were deeply tragic: first she faced her children’s incurable illness, second their death, third the abandonment of a life in the world, and lastly, the imminent separation from her only relative, her husband.

Eventually, Andronikos managed to persuade Athanasia to stay behind, promising that he would return for her. He then spent twelve years in Sketis as Daniel’s disciple. The next time he saw his wife, as noted earlier, she was disguised as a monk (*LAA*, p. 253. §8–9.200–234). At this point, the heroine’s gender performance was shown to have shifted. Her transformation was manifested through her physical appearance, which, according to Butler, was one of the most important gender markers. Butler points out that an individual’s external look defines the degree to which he or she is perceived as either ‘male’ or ‘female’.<sup>27</sup>

An illustrative example of such a performing dimension of gender in Byzantine hagiography was the cross-dressing female saint who entered a male monastery, where she lived and acted as a man and was perceived as such. By assuming a male disguise, these holy women aimed to hide

their femaleness, which they considered unfit for holiness.<sup>28</sup> Behaving in a similar way, Athanasia used the cross-dressing act as a means of suppressing her female self, which was evident in her emotionality. In addition to her male disguise, she also underwent a radical bodily change: 'her face had been altered with suffering and moreover she looked like an Ethiopian' ('τῆς ὀψεως αὐτῆς τῆ κακοπαθεία ἀλλοιωθεΐσης καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ αἰθιοπικώτερον μεταβληθεΐσης'; *LAA*, p. 254.§9.235–236).<sup>29</sup> As this passage shows, the heroine had lost all the bodily characteristics that had revealed her gender identity.

Anne Alwis argues that Athanasia kept her identity hidden in order to maintain contact with her husband.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, as also inferred from her objections to Andronikos's decision to go to Sketis, she, at least up to that point, wanted to remain by his side indefinitely. It is thus not arbitrary to suppose that she felt that she had to preserve the bond with her husband, even in another form, as brother to brother. I believe, however, that there was more to Athanasia's decision to live as a man next to her husband. I would suggest that her cross-dressing act was rather motivated by her wish to suppress her emotionality, which was identified with femininity, rather than by a desire to live with Andronikos.

As a monk living next to another monk, Athanasia had the opportunity to acquire the virtue of monastic silence.<sup>31</sup> A first opportunity to practise that silence was given to Athanasia/Athanasios when she travelled to the Holy Land with Andronikos. The author commented on their behaviour during this journey pointing out that they strove with all their power to remain silent ('concentrating on an irreproachable silence as far as they could'; 'τῆς ἀνυπευθύνου φροντίζοντες εἰς δύναμις σιωπῆς'; *LAA*, p. 254.§9.239).<sup>32</sup> For her part, Athanasia/Athanasios tried to convince Andronikos that they should stay together with the argument that their cohabitation would allow them to keep on practising the silence they had maintained during their journey (*LAA*, p. 254.§10.254–259). Silence as an important virtue was also featured in Daniel's advice to Andronikos when the latter announced his decision to cohabit with Athanasia/Athanasios (*LAA*, p. 254.§10.268). It is intriguing that practicing silence was the only advice that the wise Daniel offered to his disciple. Thus, through these repeating occurrences, the hagiographer designated silence as a very important trait in the construction of the spiritual self. It would be worthwhile, therefore, to investigate the way silence reconstructed the protagonists' emotional profiles.

Emotions are expressed through words, bodily reactions, and gestures. Moreover, in Byzantine ideology, talking too much or being too emotionally expressive was, as discussed above, a trait associated with femaleness.<sup>33</sup> Athanasia's earlier emotions were expressed primarily through laments accompanied by tears. By succumbing to her emotions in the episodes that preceded her newly assumed identity, she was manifesting her twofold 'pathos' (as the author himself put it): her attachment to her female nature and to her husband. Silence, the principal expression of an emotional *apatheia*, must thus have been related to Athanasia's previous emotionally expressive self. This was a new form of emotional response that she seemed to have mastered in the time that she spent away from her husband. The antidote for the heroine's spiritual lack seemed to be a complete absence of contact with Andronikos and an infinite distance from language and emotionality. By putting herself through the test of silence while keeping Andronikos by her side as her greatest temptation, Athanasia created a bizarre bond which cancelled the order of communication and emotional exchange altogether. In so doing, she denied both her female gender and her kin position as Andronikos's wife. She was not a woman or a wife any longer, but had become the true spiritual brother Athanasios.<sup>34</sup>

The two holy protagonists thus established their gender through showing, lacking, or suppressing emotionality. On the one hand, Andronikos's stoic, reserved, and calm reaction to the biggest tragedy that could befall one's family life, the death of one's children, cast him as male and fit to serve God. On the other hand, Athanasia's hysterical and impulsive behaviour 'made' her particularly female and rendered her unfit for divine matters. This called for the intervention of the Divine and a chastisement of the body which was premised on her emotional restraint.

In fact, through her silence, Athanasia appeared to undertake a form of bodily repentance that was not far from that of other female protagonists of hagiographical texts. Female sinners, such as the holy prostitutes in Byzantine hagiography, after realizing their sins chastised their bodies by depriving themselves of what constituted their sin. For example, Pelagia of Antioch and Mary of Egypt gave up the luxuries they used to indulge in.<sup>35</sup> Their punishments were premised mainly on extremely harsh bodily suffering. Mary of Egypt lived as a hermit in the desert for forty-seven years suffering in bad weather and having little food, whereas Pelagia, wearing a frock that tore her flesh, enclosed herself in a tomblike



cell. As for Athanasia, her repentance was premised on restraining herself from what she used to do in an excessive manner. Namely, as her lack of credentials was linked to her uncontrolled emotional outbursts, she had to shed her emotionality by maintaining total silence while living with her own husband. Thus, her practice of silence, which became possible through the cross-dressing act that led Andronikos to treat her as his spiritual brother and not his wife, relieved her emotions and allowed her to transcend her femaleness.

### ADRIANOS AND NATALIA

In the story of Adrianos and Natalia, the emotional conceptualization of the male protagonist was very similar to that of Andronikos, but there are many differences between Natalia and Athanasia in terms of the ways in which their femaleness was defined in relation to emotionality. Despite these differences, 'female' emotions once again became the kernel around which the plot unfolded.

The tale began with Adrianos's conversion to Christianity and his subsequent arrest by the Roman soldiers. Some days after his imprisonment, he bribed his guards and made his way home to see his wife, Natalia:

While he was walking in the street, he was seen by one of the townsmen who knew him and rushed to notify Natalia his wife, saying: 'Lord Adrianos is set free [...]'. And she became upset because she thought that he escaped martyrdom and she began wailing. And when she saw him, she dropped everything from her hands, got up and shut the door in his face, and she was shouting, saying, 'Let him, who has fallen away from God go away from me, him who has lied to God his lord [...]. You most wretched from all men, who forced you to attempt such a thing, which you executed before giving any thought of? [...]. And what shall I do, the wretched one, who (born) from pious ones I am joined to an impious? Not even for an hour did I have the honour to be called a martyr's wife. But right away I have become the spouse of an offender. My glory has lasted for a little while, while my shame will last forever. For an hour I was blessed among women, and behold, now I walk ashamed among them'. The blessed Adrianos [...] said to her: 'Open to me, lady Natalia, for I did not forfeit martyrdom, as you think [...]'. But she did not believe him and said: 'Look, another Judas is lying to me. Go away from me because I manage myself now; for this is what lies before me from now on'. And after long time had passed [...] she opened the door [...] and they kissed each other.

Πορευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὁρᾷ τις αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως τῶν γνωρίμων, καὶ δραμῶν ἀπήγγειλε Ναταλία τῇ συζύγῳ αὐτοῦ, λέγων· ‘Ἀπελύθη ὁ κύρις Ἀδριανός [...]’. [...] Ἡ δὲ διεταράχθη, νομίσασα, ὅτι τὸ μαρτύριον ἀπέδρα, καὶ ἔκλαιε σφοδρῶς. Ἰδοῦσα δὲ αὐτόν, καὶ καταλιποῦσα τὰ ἐν χερσίν αὐτῆς, ἀνέστη καὶ ἀπέκλεισε τὰς θύρας κατ’ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐβόα, λέγουσα· ‘Πόρρω γένοιτο ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ ὁ ἐκπεπωκὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ ψευδάμενος κύριον τὸν Θεὸν αὐτοῦ [...]’. Ὡς ἄθλιε πάντων ἀνθρώπων, τίς σε ἠνάγκασε πράγματι τοιοῦτῳ ἐπιχειρῆσαι, ὅπερ οὐ προηρήσω πληρῶσαι [...]; Ἐγὼ δὲ τί ποιήσω ἢ ἀθλία, ἢ συντυχοῦσα ἐξ εὐσεβῶν ἀσεβεῖ; οὐδὲ πρὸς ὄραν ἠξιώθην γυνὴ κληθῆναι μάρτυρος· ἄλλ’ εὐθὺς παραβάτου σύζυγος ἐγενόμην· πρὸς ὀλίγον μοι ἡ καύχησις γέγονε, καὶ εἰς αἰῶνα τὸ ὄνειδος μου ἔσται· πρὸς ὄραν ἐν γυναιξίν ἐμακαρίσθην, καὶ ἰδοὺ πορευόμαι κατησχυμένη ἐν αὐταῖς’. Ὁ δὲ μακάριος Ἀδριανός [...] λέγει αὐτῇ· ‘Ἄνοιξόν μοι, κυρία Ναταλία· οὐ γάρ, ὡς σὺ ὑπολαμβάνεις, τὸ μαρτύριον πέφευγα [...]’. Ἡ δὲ ἠπίσται αὐτῷ, λέγουσα· ‘Ἰδοὺ ψεύδεται μοι ὁ ἄλλος Ἰούδας. Πορεύου ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ, ἐπεὶ ἐμαυτὸν διαχειρίζομαι· αὐτὸ γάρ μοι λοιπὸν πρόκειται’. Ὡρας δὲ πλείστης διαγενομένης [...] ἤνοιξεν αὐτῷ, καὶ προσεκύνησαν ἀλλήλους. (PAN, pp. 222–223. §13–16)

As this passage illustrates, the *PAN*, like the *LAA*, emphasized the female protagonist’s extreme emotional reaction in the face of an unexpected and undesirable event. When informed that Adrianos was on his way home, Natalia without even attempting logical thought regarding the reason for his return succumbed to an emotional outburst characteristic, as we saw before, of the female gender. She first became upset (‘διεταράχθη’); then she burst into tears (‘ἔκλαιε σφοδρῶς’), impulsively interpreting her husband’s return as a relapse to his old faith, as a step to avoid martyrdom.

Thus, instead of asking Adrianos what had happened, she experienced an emotional climax: she dropped everything she was holding and shut the door in his face. She reproached him, shouting, accusing him of cowardice and declared that she wanted nothing to do with him, and told him that he had disgraced her. After insisting that he keep his distance, Natalia finally came to the end of her emotional outburst and listened to him. Upon realizing her error, she opened the door in a bipolar-like emotional shift, seized Adrianos, and kissed him. If a woman was considered impulsive and very emotionally expressive and unstable in her reactions, then this scene, which underscored Natalia’s state of mind in such a hyperbolic way, constructed a caricature of a woman.

Natalia's emotional range, which indicated that she was a typical female, became more apparent when it was set against Adrianos's attitude. Throughout Natalia's hysterical outburst, Adrianos remained calm, 'bearing these words' and even 'being delighted', as the text tells us, because he saw his wife's reaction as a passionate expression of her faith: 'The blessed Adrianos bore listening to these; for he was very delighted by her words [...]. At the same time, he admired that a woman said these [things]' ('Ο δὲ μακάριος Ἀδριανὸς ταῦτα ἀκούων ἠνείχετο· σφόδρα γὰρ εὐφραίνετο ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτῆς· [...] ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἐθαύμαζεν, ὅτι γυνὴ τοιαῦτα λαλεῖ'; *PAN*, p. 222. §15).

The comparison of the two protagonists' reactions was described with a hint of irony. Natalia was out of control and even became violent, leaving poor Adrianos on the doorstep. Adrianos, for his part, remained calm (as did Andronikos when he was confronted with Athanasia's impulsiveness upon the death of their children). Adrianos listened quietly to his wife's harangue. The narrator then explained his patient stance as a feeling of delight owing to what he perceived as his wife's expression of faith. As in the case in the *LAA*, the husband seemed to be focused on matters of faith, but in this text, Adrianos even found grounds to relate his wife's irrational outburst to faith. Hence, in this episode, which showcased the spouses' interaction in a difficult situation, we find two totally different attitudes: a male approach, calm and focused on divine affairs, and a female reaction, emotionally uncontrolled and impulsive, but this time for reasons also related to the Divine.

The episode described above was a highly emotional scene. Why did Natalia become so upset? It seems that the two protagonists saw their relationship to each other as complementary to a shared identity. Both Natalia and Adrianos viewed each other's performance as affecting their own. Hence, Natalia believed that Adrianos's foregoing of martyrdom would impact negatively on her status in the afterlife. If her emotional profile, linked to her female gender is taken into account, one observes that she, being impulsive, did not ask for the true reason for her husband's return home. She immediately concluded that his return heralded a future spiritual disaster and castigated him for it. Adrianos, on the other hand, understood that he shared his identity with Natalia because they were spouses, but was less demanding and more grateful for what his wife offered him:

And the blessed Adrianos said to her: ‘You are blessed among the women, because only you know how to benefit your husband, and for this you prove to be a true friend of your husband on earth. May your crown become even greater. Because you have yielded the victory and you have martyred without suffering torture’.

Ἐφη δὲ αὐτῇ ὁ μακάριος Ἀδριανός· ‘Μακαρία εἶ ἐν γυναιξίν, ὅτι σὺ μόνη ἔγνωσ ὠφελῆσαι τὸν ἄνδρα σου, φίλανδρος γενομένη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς· μεγαλυθεῖη ὁ στέφανός σου· σὺ γὰρ τὴν νίκην ἐκαρπώσω, καὶ ἐμαρτύρησας μὴ παθοῦσα’. (PAN, p. 223. §16)

Adrianos’s words illustrate that he was equally dependent on Natalia. Her stance, her advice, and her encouragement were definitive for what he was about to go through. If Natalia contributed in a way that proved beneficial throughout his ordeal, it would show that she really loved her husband, that is, was ‘φίλανδρος’, and she would be crowned a martyr without actually suffering martyrdom. Thus, instead of shouting back at his wife, Adrianos encouraged her to stand by his side. As Natalia appeared to be ‘φίλανδρος’ and not hysterical against Adrianos’s efforts, in contrast to Athanasia in the face of Andronikos’s decision to enter Sketis, the paths of both spouses to the Divine were made smoother.

Natalia’s rather ‘egoistical’ behaviour, which was designed to secure her own salvation through the husband’s martyrdom, was portrayed again in the scene of his tortures. In order to better illustrate this statement, I compare Natalia’s stance to that of another female protagonist, Episteme, who watched as her husband was being tortured. Her story is related in the anonymous *Passion of Galaktion and Episteme*.<sup>36</sup> Galaktion and Episteme were a couple who decided to abstain from intercourse and lead pious lives in a male and female monastery, respectively, until Galaktion was led to martyrdom and Episteme joined him, eventually dying with him as a martyr. When Episteme heard that her husband had been arrested, she became deeply upset. The hagiographer devoted considerable space to this episode, focusing on the way the female protagonist reacted, and he described her actions as follows:

When she heard that her lord Galaktion was being taken, bound, to the governor to be beaten, she fell at the feet of the deaconess, saying to her, ‘Pray for me, my mistress. For look, my heart is greatly pained because the god-warring men have taken my lord Galaktion to the cruel and sacrilegious governor. And look, I am setting forth so that I might die with him’.<sup>37</sup>

καὶ ὡς ἤκουσεν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος αὐτῆς Γαλακτίων ἀπέρχεται δεδεμένος ἐπὶ τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ τυφθῆναι, πεσοῦσα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῆς διακόνου, λέγει πρὸς αὐτήν· Ἐῶσαι ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ δέσποινά μου· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀλγεῖ μου ἡ καρδία πάνυ, ὅτι τὸν κύριόν μου Γαλακτίωνα ἤραν οἱ θεομάχοι πρὸς τὸν παράνομον καὶ ἀσεβέστατον ἄρχοντα. Καὶ ἰδοὺ πορεύομαι ἀγά, ἵνα σὺν αὐτῷ τελειωθῶ'. (*Passion of Galaktion and Episteme*, pp. 39–40. §12)

Expressions that highlight a strong emotional bond, such as 'ἀλγεῖ μου ἡ καρδία πάνυ', are typically absent from Passions. Instead, more usually, one martyr rejoices for the other's decision to suffer martyrdom or the hagiographer bypasses it without any comment on the hero's emotional state. Here, in contrast, Episteme begged her husband not to desert her (*Passion of Galaktion and Episteme*, p. 40. §12). One could say that her behaviour was quite shockingly impious. Instead of focusing on forgoing all earthly matters as a typical potential martyr would do, she behaved like a loving wife, thus betraying an orientation to earthly relationships. Moreover, she showed a kind of spiritual weakness in the face of an adverse event, which was attributed to the female gender, as we saw, for example, in Athanasia's response to the death of her children and Natalia's response to her husband's return from prison.

Let us now compare Episteme's touching reaction to that of Natalia:

One of Adrianos's servants [...] notified his wife Natalia, saying: 'My lord has been led to prison in chains'. And she stood up and ripped her clothes and she wailed with a loud voice and, crying, she said to the boy: 'What is the reason for which my lord has been incarcerated?' The boy said to her: 'He saw some people being tortured in the name of the so-called Christ and [...] he asked the notaries to put his name together with those men, saying: "Because I will gladly die with them [...]". Then filled with joy, the blessed Natalia [...] rushed to the prison for him [...]. And [...] she fell to his feet and she told him [...]: 'You are blessed, my lord Adrianos, because you found what your parents did not bequeath to you'.

Εἷς δὲ τῶν οικετῶν [...] ἀπήγγειλε τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ Ναταλία λέγων· Ὁ κύριός μου σιδηρωθεὶς ἀπηνέχθη εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν'. Ἡ δὲ ἀναστάσα διέρρηξε τὴν ἐσθῆτα αὐτῆς, καὶ ὠλόλυξε μετὰ φωνῆς, καὶ εἶπε κλαίουσα τῷ παιδί· Τίς ἡ αἰτία, δι' ἣν ἐνεκλείσθη ὁ κύριός μου'; Ἐφη πρὸς αὐτήν ὁ παῖς· Τινὰς εἶδε βασανιζομένους ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ, καὶ [...] παρεκάλεισε τοὺς ταχυγράφους τάξει αὐτοῦ τὸ ὄνομα μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων, εἰπών· Ὅτι ἡδέως μετ' αὐτῶν ἀποθνήσκω" [...]. Τότε περιχαρὴς γενομένη ἡ μακαρία Ναταλία, [...] δρομαῖα

ὄρμησεν εἰς τὸ δεσμωτήριον πρὸς αὐτόν [...]. Καὶ [...] προσπίπτει τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, [...]· ‘Μακάριος εἶ, κύριέ μου Ἀδριανέ, ὅτι εὖρες, ἃ μὴ κατέλιπόν σοι οἱ γονεῖς σου’. (PAN, p. 221. §8–9)

Seen against Episteme’s response, Natalia’s cold, almost inhuman reaction upon Adrianos’s arrest created a very sharp contrast. Episteme behaved very much like Athanasia, who broke down when faced with the sufferings of her children. To be accurate, Natalia had an outburst as well: ripping her clothes off and wailing loudly. But as soon as she found out the reason for Adrianos’s arrest, she did not become upset, but, rather, filled with joy, she ran to the prison, not to join her husband as Episteme did, but to congratulate him for his decision to die as a martyr. Natalia explained to her husband why it was important to die and urged him not to hesitate. In her case, however, there was an emotional imbalance: she wavered between the two ends of the emotional scale, as her original extreme grief turned into ultimate joy. Her emotional imbalance was further illustrated by her behaviour during the actual scene of martyrdom and when compared to the corresponding behaviour of Episteme.

During the interrogation of Galaktion, Episteme remained silent, listening attentively to how he talked and defended his faith, but her silence was broken when Galaktion’s tortures started. She exclaimed: ‘O merciless tyrant, O heartless governor. Wretch, how can you not pity such beautiful limbs, which you consume by scourges? Spare the young man, O brutal and foul one’ (‘ὦ ἀσπλαγχνία τυράννου, ὃ ἀπανθρωπία ἄρχοντος. ἄθλιε, πῶς οὐκ ἐλεεῖς τοιαῦτα ὠραῖα μέλη καταναλίσκων ταῖς μάστιξι, φεῖσαι τοῦ νέου, ὃ μίαιρὲ καὶ ἀκάθαρτε’; *Passion of Galaktion and Episteme*, p. 40. §13).<sup>38</sup> The tyrant’s cold and inhuman stance contrasts with Episteme’s charged emotional reaction to Galaktion’s flogging. The heroine wanted her loved one’s suffering to stop. She did not urge her husband to be strong, but instead she cried, she protested, she begged, illustrating the typical female emotions we have already observed upon human suffering and death. As this was not enough to show her affection and agony for her husband, Episteme also gave voice to her admiration for Galaktion’s beautiful body (‘τοιαῦτα ὠραῖα μέλη’), and wondered how the torturer could inflict such cruelty on such an exquisiteness. Clearly, the female protagonist of this text showed affection for her husband, voiced through her grief for him, and this affection was more pronounced than her expressions of faith. This reaction in turn was what confirmed her femaleness and her consequent inferior nature.

Natalia, by contrast, had different thoughts regarding her husband's beautiful body: 'Be careful, my lord, do not take delight in the beauty of your body, and do not pay attention to the nice appearance of your age. For all these are food for worms' ("Όρα, κύριέ μου, μὴ τερφοθῆς τῆ καλλονῆ τοῦ σώματός σου, μὴ δὲ πρὸς τὸ εὐειδὲς τῆς ἡλικίας σου πρόσχης· ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα τροφή σκωλήκων ἐστὶ"; *PAN*, p. 222.§12). For Natalia, too, Adrianos had an attractive body, but for her, as it should have been for him, this body was simply food for worms. Natalia did not express any grief in the face of her husband's suffering and even remained calm. Her reactions in this episode may seem contrary to her previously analysed erratic behaviour, but I would suggest that it was driven by the same logic.

I contend that Natalia was anxious to secure her place in Paradise. Instead of calmness, her reserved reaction was, I believe, an expression of agony and fear that she might not be able to achieve holiness if Adrianos hesitated. In line with this logic, if her husband did not prove worthy enough to gain a place in Heaven for both of them, she might end up all alone. As much as her emotions defined her gender performatively, this correlation also runs the other way around. As Adrianos's wife, as any wife whose fate in a patriarchal society depends on the husband, Natalia saw her salvation as depending on that of Adrianos, which is why she encouraged him to go through the tortures of martyrdom, and in so doing proved herself to be 'φίλανδρος'. Hence, restraining her emotional reactions and expressions seemed to be the only way for her to achieve her goal, and this was also the case in the episode of Adrianos's last ordeal.

When Adrianos, as expected, refused to comply with the judge's orders, he was beaten, which signalled the beginning of his tortures. Natalia played a very active role throughout her husband's ordeal. In a way, she served as the intermediary between Adrianos and the other martyrs, reporting what she saw happening. We are thus constantly reminded of her presence in the narrative. The details we are presented with in the martyrdom scene are gruesome, but, unlike Episteme, we do not see Natalia complaining or interrupting that scene even when confronted with the most cruel spectacle. For example, it was vividly narrated how, owing to the fierce beating, parts of Adrianos's flesh fell to the ground while blood ran out of his wounds (*PAN*, p. 225.§21). Next, he was beaten on the abdomen so hard that his intestines spread out on the ground (*PAN*, p. 225.§23). At that point, Natalia acted as her husband's support both physically, touching the back of his neck (in a gesture of

affection not characteristic of the personality she had displayed before), and psychologically by encouraging him (*PAN*, p. 226.§24). She was thus emotionally invested in her husband's suffering in an affectionate way. She even wiped the blood from his wounds with her bare hands (*PAN*, p. 226.§25). Natalia may not have suffered martyrdom herself, as Episteme did, but she was nevertheless by her husband's side, trying hard to prove herself to be 'φίλανδρος'. The fact that her reserved emotional attitude was due to her fear concerning her fate in the afterlife was apparent from the single request she addressed to Adrianos during his torment:

I beg you, lord, remember your spouse, for I contributed to your martyrdom, and I anointed you for your fights and I procured this crown for you. So ask Christ, your lord, to receive me with you, so that as we have become partners in this wicked and sin-loving life, in the same way we will also share that blessed and painless ending.

Δέομαί σου, κύριε, μνήσθητι τῆς συζύγου σου, ὅτι συνήργησά σοι ἐν τῷ μαρτυρίῳ, καὶ ἠλειψά σε πρὸς τοὺς ἀγῶνας, καὶ πρόξενός σοι ἐγενόμην τοῦ στεφάνου τούτου. Παρακάλεσον οὖν τὸν Δεσπότην Χριστόν, ἵνα παραλάβῃ με μετὰ σοῦ, ἵνα ὡσπερ κοινωνοὶ ἐγενόμεθα ἐν τῷ μοχθηρῷ, καὶ φιλαμαρτήμονι τούτῳ βίῳ, οὕτως καὶ τῆς μακαρίας ἐκείνης καὶ ἀπόνου λήξεως κοινωνήσωμεν ἅμα. (*PAN*, p. 227.§27)

Apparently, Natalia considered the salvation of her soul as an act of affection on behalf of Adrianos with whom she expected to share death as she had shared life. She summarized her position throughout Adrianos's ordeal as an argument in support of her deserving a place in Paradise, declaring that the salvation of her soul would be proof of her husband's feelings for her. The fact that this was her only demand demonstrated once again her fear that she might not earn the crown of holiness and end up all alone.

Thus, Natalia's profile revisited with a view towards the emotion of fear is seen in a different light. She displayed a more 'cruel' and calm stance against her husband compared to her previous reactions because she seemed to believe that this was the only way she and her husband could gain the crown of holiness. Adrianos's last cycle of tortures was another characteristic example in support of this contention. Episteme, as noted above, intervened to bring her husband's ordeal to



an end and then tried to comfort him. Natalia's approach was, once again, rather different. Not only did she not beg for her husband's tortures to stop, but she even begged the executioners to 'finish' her husband 'off' first, before the other martyrs, because she was afraid that he might try to avert martyrdom: "I beg you, thereupon, start first with Adrianos". She said this because she was afraid lest he, watching the saints suffering this bitter torture before him, become terrified and retreat' ("δέομαι ὑμῶν ἔνθεν πρῶτον ἀπὸ Ἀδριανοῦ ἄρξασθε". Τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγε, φοβουμένη μήπως ὄρων τοὺς ἁγίους πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὴν πικρὰν ταύτην ὑπομένοντας βάσανον, πτοηθεὶς δειλανδρήση'; *PAN*, p. 227.§29). Natalia was afraid that her husband might fear death. Actually, as Adrianos's death was approaching, Natalia became even more aggressive, especially if we consider her stance as set against that of Episteme:

And when he put the slab under him, Natalia took Andrianos's legs and stretched them on the slab. And they struck with great force and they cut his legs off, after they crushed his limbs. And Natalia said to him: 'I beseech you, servant of Christ, while you still breathe, stretch your hand, and they will take it from you, so that you become equal to the saints in this too. For they were punished more than you'. And ceding his hand to her, she laid it on the slab. And they struck and cut it off.

Ὅτε δὲ ὑπέθηκε τὸν ἄκμωνα, λαβοῦσα ἡ Ναταλία ἤπλωσε τοὺς πόδας Ἀδριανοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἄκμωνος· καὶ δυνάμει μεγάλη κρούσαντες, ἀπέτεμον αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας, συντρίψαντες τὰ κῶλα αὐτοῦ. Καὶ λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡ Ναταλία· 'δέομαί σου, δοῦλε τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐν ὅσῳ ἔτι ἐμπνέεις, ἔκτενόν σου τὴν χεῖρα, καὶ ἀροῦσιν αὐτὴν ἀπὸ σοῦ, ἵνα ἴσος καὶ ἐν τούτῳ τοῖς ἁγίοις γένη· πλεῖον γάρ σου ἐτιμωρήθησαν ἐκεῖνοι'. Καὶ ἐπιδοὺς αὐτῇ τὴν χεῖρα, ἐπέθηκε τῷ ἄκμωνι. Κρούσαντες δὲ ἀπέτεμον αὐτὴν. (*PAN*, pp. 227–228.§29)

As this passage shows, Natalia helped the executioners crush her husband's limbs by stretching them out herself. After Adrianos's legs had been cut off and his limbs crushed, she declared to his face that he had not scored high enough with this torture as the men that had been tortured before him suffered more gruesome torments. She then told Adrianos to offer his arm to the executioner, which she herself gladly once again laid on the bench to be cut off. But most chillingly, after

Adrianos's hand had been cut off, she stole it and anointed her body with her dead husband's dripping blood (*PAN*, p. 228.§30). As earlier in his ordeal, in Adrianos's last moments Natalia directed her emotions towards encouraging him, and after his death, she kept his corpse near her, expecting to share the martyr's holiness. Thus, the male partner who 'made it' to Heaven would now intercede for the female partner, the one considered more fragile and less spiritual.

Natalia could not let go of her husband even after his death as she saw no future without him, which was why his hand was the only thing that she took with her when she went to find the place where her husband's body was buried (*PAN*, p. 229.§35). After she reached the burial place, she laid Adrianos's hand next to his body ('καὶ λαβοῦσα τὴν χεῖρα, ἔθηκεν αὐτὴν ἐγγὺς τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀδριανοῦ'; *PAN*, p. 230.§37). In a touching gesture, the wife pieced the mutilated body of her husband back together. Along with the missing body part (the hand) in order to be whole, she also brought his missing part of their shared identity, her own self, her female self that she perceived to be nothing without her husband. This seemingly cold-hearted protagonist could only rest after lying down next to her husband's body to which she surrendered her spirit (*PAN*, p. 230.§38).

This was Natalia's only calm moment throughout the text and it was a moment sealed in death. The heroine displayed reactions that seem impulsive and hysterical, on the one hand, and cold and inhuman, on the other, a complete emotional limbo which was not seen in the case of the male protagonist. From the point of view of the reader or listener, Natalia's gender seems to be exaggerated to the utmost degree by this emotional imbalance. However, if we turn to Natalia's point of view, it is the other way around. It was because she perceived herself as incapable of gaining a place in Heaven on her own that she evidenced this broad range of antithetical emotions. She appointed herself as her husband's helper and directed her emotions in such a way that she could secure her own holiness through that of her husband.

The above analyses focused on two hagiographical texts in which the protagonists' emotions or their lack are the primary factors that define their gender identities. The correlation of gender and emotion seems to be an aspect understood and exploited by the hagiographers of both texts. Thus, they put their protagonists through adverse or difficult situations, where both male and female characters experienced similar emotions which they expressed in different ways. In the *LAA*, the negative

situation involved was the death of the couple's children, which led to the abandonment of the spouses' old life and their ascetic struggle. Likewise, in the *PAN*, the protagonists' emotions, or lack thereof, were revealed upon Adrianos's arrest, his escaping from prison, and his cycle of tortures.

The two male protagonists, Andronikos and Adrianos, evidenced emotional states that were more straightforward and less fluid: calmness, patience, *apatheia*. All these 'male' emotions were in accord with the ones that the martyrs, both male and female, are presented experiencing in the eleventh-century illuminated *Menologion of Basil II* (Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 1613) discussed by Valentina Cantone in this volume. Here, we observe that both husbands maintained the same serene psychical state without any wavering from the beginning to the end of the texts. They even remained calm when they faced the most horrible psychical or physical ordeals such as the death of a child (Andronikos) or the tearing of flesh (Adrianos). These male protagonists did not succumb to any reaction, neither lexical nor physical, and showed no hesitation. For example, after the death of their children, both Andronikos and Athanasia wished to pursue a monastic life. But Andronikos had no reservations about leaving his wife behind, whereas Athanasia wanted to remain with her husband. This reserved and patient stance was what seemed to ultimately define Andronikos and Adrianos first as male and second as holy.

In contrast, both female protagonists were more emotionally expressive in regard to such negative emotions as grief and anger, or even positive emotions that were judged as negative by the hagiographer, such as excessive affection for a child. They both underwent emotional shifts, which in turn delineated their gender positions. Thus, divine intervention was required to put an end to Athanasia's emotional hysteria and she was subsequently barred from every emotion and from every expression of emotion through silence, which then made her worthy of becoming first Athanasios's spiritual brother and then a saint.

Natalia was also radical in her emotional expressions, which fluctuated throughout the text, from her first display of typical female emotions expressed through an outburst to her last reactions of extreme *apatheia* as an expression of fear in the face of the possibility of losing salvation. She succeeded in making herself manly in the end, but accomplished this by sharing her husband's manliness instead of changing herself. She directed all her efforts towards making her husband a martyr whose holiness she, as the wife, could share.

Consequently, in the two texts discussed above, gender and kinship are not stable concepts. They changed according to the way in which the protagonists regulated and expressed their emotions. The protagonists' male or female gender was dependent on how they behaved emotionally in particular situations and it was an attribute that could change if they changed their emotional disposition. In turn, kin positions were regulated by these gender shifts. For example, spouses such as Andronikos and Athanasia ended up being brothers because of Athanasia's emotional and physical shift. Likewise, Natalia declared herself independent of Adrianos while she was angry with him (she told him that she wanted nothing to do with him when she considered him a sinner). By contrast, she strove to prove that she had behaved as a pious wife throughout his martyrdom. Hence, kin positions altered according to the female protagonists' emotional dispositions.

The conclusions drawn in this chapter indicate how hagiographical literature could be better understood from the perspective of the protagonists' emotions or their lack. If the emotions presented in the two texts are not taken into account, the narrative mechanisms that underlie their construction remain hidden, leaving our interpretations severely curtailed. All in all, as this volume shows, the study of emotions could open up new directions in the interpretation of Byzantine texts.

The investigation of emotions within certain genres or study in the form of comparisons among the literary genres themselves could add to our knowledge. For example, the following chapter by Lenora Neville, which focuses on emotions appearing in the genre of historiography, draws conclusions similar to the ones I draw here. Her study features a male author and a female author, John Kaminiates and Anna Komnene, who are also protagonists in their texts. Both of them chose to stress their gender, the male (in the case of John) and the female (in the case of Anna), by adjusting their emotional responses in order to craft positive authorial personas. Thus, the male author appears more reserved in certain negative situations, whereas the female author seems to be more emotionally expressive. Thus, a study of emotions comparing the genre of historiography with that of hagiography could open new directions related to the way Byzantine authors constructed their characters according to or despite the respective literary genre. It could also illuminate the way these authors perceived and expected their characters to act in line with the emotional credentials they provided for them.

## NOTES

1. See indicatively Michael Champion and Andrew Lynch, *Understanding Emotions in Early Europe* (Turhout: Brepols, 2015); Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Cultures* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2009).
2. Among the very few studies that address the intertwining of gender and emotion in Byzantine hagiography are Stavroula Constantinou's *Female Corporeal Performances: Reading the Body in Byzantine Passions and Lives of Holy Women*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 9 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2005), 19–52; eadem, 'The Saint's Two Bodies: Sensibility Under Self-Torture in Byzantine Hagiography', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 66 (2015): 285–320.
3. See, for example, the repentant prostitute Mary of Egypt who in narrating her story to the monk Zosimas expresses shame and regret for her previous lifestyle (*PG* 87: 3697–725). Mary's narration is found there, cols. 3712–719.
4. The feeling of contempt is very common in Passions. Martyrs disregard their torturers and openly express this feeling. See, for example, the *Passion of Marina of Antioch*. The heroine disregards her torturer's threats and urges him to do whatever he desires to her body as she will still remain indifferent; 'Acta S. Marinae et S. Christophori', in *Festschrift zur fünften Säcularfeier der Carl-Ruprechts-Universität zu Heidelberg*, ed. Herman Usener (Bonn: Universitäts-Buchdruckerei von Carl Georgi, 1886), 15–47. As regards instances of excitement, see, for example, the stylite saint Symeon the Younger, who experiences holy apparitions and is filled with joy, but also rejoices when he engages in gruesome self-ordeals such as binding himself with iron fetters while sitting on his knees for a long time; *La Vie ancienne de S. Syméon Stylite le Jeune, 521–592*, ed. Paul van den Ven, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 32, 2 vols. (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1962), 1: 1–224, 2: 253–314.
5. Anne Alwis (ed.), 'Life of Andronikos and Athanasia', in *Celibate Marriages in Late Antique and Byzantine Hagiography: The Lives of Saints Julian and Basilissa, Andronikos and Athanasia, and Galaktion and Episteme* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 250–68. 'Passion of Adrianos and Natalia', *Acta Sanctorum Septembris* 3 (1750): 218–30.
6. For emotions that are usually studied in medieval hagiography, see, for example, Lazikani Ayoush, *Cultivating the Heart: Feeling and Emotion in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Religious Texts* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015); Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). For Byzantine hagiography specifically,

- see Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). For emotions in Byzantium in general, see Martin Hinterberger, 'Emotions in Byzantium', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 123–34.
7. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages in Late Antique and Byzantine Hagiography*, 7–8. For a detailed presentation of Daniel and his collection, see Britt Dahlman, *Saint Daniel of Sketis: A Group of Hagiographic Texts, Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 10 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2007). The term 'spiritually edifying stories' (*narrationes animae utiles*) was coined by the Bollandists to describe tales that grew from desert fathers' maxims and experiences. On this, see Hippolyte Delehaye, 'Un group de récits "utiles à l'âme"', *Mélanges d'hagiographie grecques et latines* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1966), 384–93. See also John Wortley, *Les récits édifiants de Paul, évêque de Monembasie, et d'autres auteurs*, Sources d'Historie Medievale (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1987); idem, 'Uses and Abuses of Psychopelitic Tales', *Basilissa I* (2004): 81–89, as well as Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 122–23 and 146–47, fn. 85, which include references to examples of these narratives.
  8. There is also a shorter version of the text (*BHG* 29) in an eleventh-century codex (Cod. bibl. reg. Par. 1453a); François Halkin (ed.), 'Une passion grecque inédite des saints Adrien et Natalie (*BHG* 29)', *Hagiologie byzantine: Textes inédits publiés en grec et traduits en français*, Subsidia Hagiographica, 71 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1986), 47–55. For all the relevant information regarding the date of composition and the author, see Halkin 'Une passion grecque', 47. For the purposes of this chapter, I have used the extended version.
  9. Butler put forward her argument concerning the performativity of gender mainly in her work *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990). She later argued for the performativity of kinship in *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2000).
  10. See indicatively Michael Angold, 'The Wedding of Digenes Akrites: Love and Marriage in Byzantium in the 11th and 12th Centuries', *Πρακτικά του Α' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου: Η καθημερινή ζωή στο Βυζάντιο: Τομές και συνέχειες στην ελληνιστική και ρωμαϊκή παράδοση, Αθήνα, 15–17 Σεπτεμβρίου 1988*, ed. Christina Angelidi (Athens: The National Hellenic Research Foundation, 1989); Angeliki Laiou, *Marriage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XIe–XIIIe siècles*, Travaux et mémoires du Centre

- de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 7 (Paris: De Boccard, 1992) for the eleventh and twelfth centuries.
11. Repeated also later in ('he attempted to plea with his helper'; 'παρακαλεῖν ἐπειρᾶτο τὴν βοηθόν', *LAA*, p. 251, §5.97–98; trans. Anne Alwis; *Celibate Marriages*, 258, with minor modifications).
  12. See characteristically John Chrysostom's view that if a patriarchy was not in place within the familial unit, discord would inevitably arise (*Hom. 34 I Cor. 3* [PG 61: 289–90]). Chrysostom made the same point on many occasions. For a more comprehensive list of references on the issue, see Elizabeth Clark, *Jerome, Chrysostom and Friends: Essays and Translations*, Studies in Women and Religion, 2 (New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen, 1979), 2, fns. 4–9. For the man as woman's 'head' see also Stavroula Constantinou "‘Il capo della donna è l'uomo’: la *Kyriarchia* e la retorica della subordinazione femminile nella letteratura bizantina", trans. Lavinia Ceccarelli, in *Donne e Bibbia nel Medioevo, Secoli VI–XII*, Vol. 6.1, ed. Franca-Ela Consolino and Judith Herrin (Tripani: Il Pozzo di Giacobbe, 2015), 17–36. For gendered approaches in Byzantine studies, see Catia S. Galatariotou, 'Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1984/1985): 55–94. Diether R. Reinsch, 'Women's Literature in Byzantium? The Case of Anna Komnene', in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York and London: Garland, 2000). Svetlana Tomin, 'Perceptions of Women in Serbian Medieval Literature', *Studi sull'Oriente Cristiano* 10 (2006): 75–99.
  13. Denys Gorce (ed.), *Vie de Sainte Mélanie: texte grec, introduction, traduction et notes*, SC 90 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 124–270. The relevant episode is on p. 136.
  14. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 257.
  15. *Ibid.*
  16. Lament in Byzantium was considered a characteristically female reaction in instances of grief. See, for example, the scenes of lamentation in Byzantine art, where men are usually more reserved and women are depicted lamenting. Henry Maguire, 'The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 123–74; *idem*, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 101–11.
  17. Stavroula Constantinou, 'Il capo della donna è l'uomo', 17–36.
  18. Trans. by Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 258.
  19. *Ibid.*, 258.
  20. *Ibid.*

21. For further observations regarding how Athanasia's gender is presented in the text, see Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 103–5.
22. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 258.
23. *Ibid.*, 259–60.
24. *Vie de Sainte Mélanie*, 136.
25. 'said with tears', 'with flowing tears' ('ἔφη σὺν δάκρυσιν', 'δάκρυσι περιρροεμένη' *LAA*, p. 252.§7.179, p. 253.§8.189; trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 259–60); see Martin Hinterberger, 'Tränen in der Byzantinischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Emotionen', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006): 27–51, for the meaning of tears.
26. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 260.
27. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 25.
28. For a discussion of issues of gender in relation to disguise in the lives of cross-dressers, see Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances*, 90–126; eadem, 'Holy Actors and Actresses: Fools and Cross-Dressers as the Protagonists of Saints' Lives', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, Vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Farnham Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 343–62.
29. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 260.
30. *Ibid.*, 58–60.
31. Silence was considered to be a prime virtue in monastic life and was even a rule within the monastic context in both Byzantium and the medieval West. Although there is no monograph devoted exclusively to this subject in Byzantium, the issue has become the focus of a number of articles from Western medievalists: see, for example, Paul F. Gehl, 'Competens silentium: Varieties of Monastic Silence in the Medieval West', *Viator* 18 (1987): 125–60. For the tenth to the thirteenth centuries specifically, see Scott G. Bruce, *Silence and Sign Language in Medieval Monasticism: The Cluniac Tradition, c. 900–1200*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 68 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
32. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 260.
33. On the perception of women who 'talked too much' in Christian thought, see David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 34–35.
34. She is constantly referred to as brother Athanasios. See, for example, *LAA*, p. 254.§10.276; p. 255.§11.289; p. 255.§11.298; p. 255.§11.305.
35. For Pelagia, see Pierre Petitmengin, *Pélagie la Pénitente: métamorphoses d'une légende*, 2 vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981), vol. 1: *Les textes et leur histoire*, 92–93. For Mary of Egypt, see *PG* 87; 3713–721.



36. The text must have been written at some point between the second and the ninth century. For a discussion regarding the date of composition, see Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 8–10, ed., in *Acta Sanctorum Maii I* (1680), 741–44.
37. Trans. Anne Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 291.
38. *Ibid.*, 292.



## CHAPTER 3

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# Pity and Lamentation in the Authorial Personae of John Kaminiates and Anna Komnene

*Leonora Neville*

One of the challenges inherent in studying Byzantine emotion is that we can access it only through texts and objects that are centuries old. We cannot see actual emotions, but only literary and artistic representations of feelings. Moreover, rhetoric was an art of persuasion, in which authors endeavoured, by their performances, to elicit particular attitudes and emotions from their audiences. Rhetoricians depicted or enacted *pathos* for the purpose of provoking a desired response. Thus, our depictions of emotion in literary texts all have agendas. Similarly, we do not see real women and men expressing their gender in our literary texts, but rather representations of gendered behaviour, crafted with a view to the role those performances played in achieving the authors' rhetorical goals. In studying both gender and emotion, then, we need to be attuned to how the literary representation of these phenomena worked to achieve the authors' aims.

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The author's goals, and often the author's biography, are generally known only through the text itself.<sup>1</sup> Only through the slow unraveling and comparison of many texts can we begin to recognize the patterns that let us define the rhetorical strategies at play. As we learn more about Middle Byzantine culture, gender, and rhetoric, we can see how the rhetorical methods used by authors functioned and begin to imagine the social and gender contexts that would motivate a particular textual presentation.

Recent studies of Byzantine gender have given us a far more precise understanding of what was at stake for the authors of our texts. In particular, several scholars have developed a model of Byzantine gender that holds great promise for understanding the presentation of gender in these rhetorical texts. This model posits that masculinity was enacted through maintaining control over one's self and others. Ideal men did not show their virility through sexual activity, but rather by having the self-control to restrain their sexual impulses. Women were thought to be naturally subject to emotion and unable to control the effects of *pathos*. Women were dangerous because, through their inability to restrain their emotions and animal impulses, they tempted men to similarly lose control. Particularly through their lack of sexual restraint, women could threaten the order of the world that masculine authority was supposed to uphold. Immodest women who tempted men to lose control were considered profoundly evil. Some women could learn to control *pathos* through effortful self-discipline. A woman who controlled herself, or others, could have been considered manly, and it was considered highly virtuous for women to exercise self-restraint. Modest and demure women helped to uphold the proper natural order by disciplining their behaviour so as to assist men in maintaining their self-control and hence masculine authority.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter uses this model of gender to explicate two texts that display extreme emotions: John Kaminiates's narration of the capture of Thessalonike and Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. In both of these texts, the display and restraint of emotion play a significant role in establishing the character and the gender of the narrator. They form an excellent case for exploring the connections among emotion, power, and gender in Byzantium because they both have first-person narrators who were ostensibly the author, one a man and one a woman. Both Anna and John also inverted the normative power structures in Byzantine culture. John, who as a man ought to have been in charge, was deeply disempowered

through his experience of capture. He was deprived of his autonomy, stripped of his property, and rendered unable to protect his wife and children as they were sold into slavery. Anna, who as a woman ought to have been submissive to masculine authority, was manifestly powerful. She was wealthy, aristocratic, and able to exercise a truly remarkable degree of authorial power in taking up the masculine task of writing history. The contextual restraints of their works were such that Anna was empowered and masculinized and John was disempowered and feminized.

The rhetorical challenge for both authors was how to create a positive persona in the text despite the situational gender inversion. In both texts, the author wanted to be seen as having good character. John may have been trying to get ransomed, and both presumably wanted to be considered trustworthy historians. So, they were motivated to gain the good opinion of their audiences. I see both authors as endeavouring to normalize the situation by creating textual personas for themselves in which they played what Byzantine society would have considered their more natural gender roles. John tried to portray himself as a man of extraordinary emotional control and, hence, power, in what I see as a bid to maintain his masculinity in the midst of his abject disempowerment. Anna played the suffering old widow in a bid to be seen as humble and demure in the midst of her flagrant exercise of authorial power. In both cases, the authors used performances of emotion to enact the desired gender role.

John Kaminiates's first-person account of the sack of Thessalonike by Leo of Tripoli in 904 is framed as a letter to a friend, Gregory of Cappadocia, who had asked John for a full description of the fall of the city and the subsequent treatment of the captives.<sup>3</sup> It survives in a fifteenth-century manuscript together with other texts on the history of Thessalonike.<sup>4</sup> Alexander Kazhdan suggested that the text was in fact a fifteenth-century composition that did not describe actual tenth-century events.<sup>5</sup> Further research, however, has grounded it more securely in the religious and cultural contexts of early tenth-century Thessalonike and most scholars now reject the idea that it is a work of historical fiction.<sup>6</sup> Accepting that the text was written in the tenth century and reflects real events does not entail treating it as a news dispatch. It is an artful text that we should approach as a work of rhetoric in which the author has been careful to present material in such a way as to provoke the responses he desired among his audience. John's text possibly had a practical purpose in raising money for his ransom.<sup>7</sup>

If Byzantine masculinity were substantiated by maintaining control over oneself and community, the experience of a foreign conquest of a man's home, his helplessly witnessing the murder of his relatives and fellow citizens, and the enslavement of his family would have been profoundly emasculating. These events, which John presents as personal experiences, were deeply horrifying on many levels. At the moment of the sack of Thessalonike, John was probably more worried about his life than his masculine honour. When he turned to constructing a narrative about these events, however, we can see him struggling to tell a story of abject disempowerment in which he still maintained some level of control. The events described thoroughly overturned and violated the norms of masculine and feminine decorum prized by John's society.

John chose to frame his historical narrative as a letter to a friend rather than as a history. Aglae Pizzone has argued that by encasing the narrative within a letter, the author created the illusion of an intimate discourse between friends.<sup>8</sup> The emotionally raw content of the narrative would be difficult to discuss in public. History writing was fundamentally a public discourse in which the historian recorded great deeds and events worthy of memory for posterity. The ability of the historian to remain emotionally detached from the material was considered essential for the veracity of the history.<sup>9</sup> This genre is not well suited to a story in which John had to explain his own enslavement. Beyond the problems raised by his suffering, the story calls upon him to discuss his wife, sister, and sister-in-law. The ancient Greek injunction that simply mentioning women in public dishonoured them was well known and apparently in force in Byzantine culture.<sup>10</sup> John would have wanted to keep his wife out of any public discourse. By constructing his text so that his audience became eavesdroppers on a private communication between friends, he was able to record a history for posterity that did not air his personal familial woes in a public forum.

After establishing the epistolary frame, John proceeded with a laudatory description of Thessalonike and a narrative of the events leading up to Leo of Tripoli's attack on the city. These sections conform most closely to traditions of writing encomium, ekphrasis, and history. John's narrative becomes more personal, and more unusual, when he describes the capture of the city and the experiences of the captives.

From the point where the Abbasid forces entered the city, John maintained a dual narrative, on the one hand describing the experiences and suffering of the people of the city in a general abstract sense, and on the other, revealing what happened to himself and his family.

It is in this division in the subject of his story and the separate treatment of the two narrative strands that we see most clearly his attempt to craft a self-portrayal in which he maintains control over himself.

John created a rhetorical self in the text that was more a witness to tragedy than a sufferer. He described the anguish of others, but scrupulously avoided first-person expressions of grief. His method was first to detail the suffering of others, and only later after some narrative separation, did he admit that he and his family experienced the same horrors. In his description of others, he seems to have been trying to elicit sympathy and compassion in his audience.

John presented the anonymous suffering of the group in great detail in his description of how families were dispersed to different vessels in Thessalonike:

So all the young people were led away, their only crime being the bloom of youth and the beauty of their faces. Which incident shall I single out as having a better claim on one's sympathy, when one confused and universal cry of lamentation rose to such a climax as all natural ties were severed and close relatives called out to one another and voiced their indignation at being parted? One could see the frenzied victims of misfortune, men, women, youths, children letting out terrible screams and tearing at themselves, no longer able to put on a brave face at the hopeless anguish that enveloped them by giving vent at last with cries of pain to the burning grief that seared their souls. Thus were they forcibly separated and herded onto the ships.

ἤγετο οὖν τὸ νεάζον πρόσωπον ἅπαν τοῦτο μόνον κατηγορίαν ἔχον, τὸ ἀνθηρὸν τῆς ἡλικίας ἢ τῶν προσώπων τὴν ὠραιότητα. ποῖον δὲ κατ'ἄξίαν ἔλλεινότερον κρινῶ; ὅποτε συμμιγῆς τις καὶ σφοδρὸς ἀνήγετο θρήνος διχοτομουμένης τῆς φύσεως, ἀλλήλους τοὺς ἀγχιστεῖς ἀνακαλουμένους καὶ τὸν χωρισμὸν δυσχεραίνοντας. καὶ γὰρ ἦν ἰδεῖν τοὺς τῷ πάθει συγκεχυμένους, ἄνδρας γυναικας, ἀκμάζοντας παῖδας, ὁμοῦ πάντας δεινὸν ἀλαλάζοντας καὶ ἑαυτοὺς διαρρηγνύοντας, καὶ μηκέτι κατέχειν τὴν ἀθυμίαν τῶν τοσοῦτων ὀχληρῶν ἐξισχύοντας, ἀλλὰ δηλοῦντας ταῖς οἰμωγαῖς τὴν ἔνδον τῆς καρδίας διάθεσιν, ὡς ἅπαντα καταπίμπραται τῶν πειρασμῶν ταῖς φλογώσεσιν. ὡς γὰρ βιαίως οὕτως ἐξ ἀλλήλων διαιρεθέντες φύρδην ταῖς ὀλκάσιν εἰσῆχθησαν.<sup>11</sup>

John did not disclose in the midst of this description that he was separated from his own wife and children. Only several pages later in a different context did he reveal that his father was able to negotiate with

the attackers to try to bring their family together. John, his father, and older brothers were reunited with his mother, a younger brother, and a brother's wife, but they were not able to find John's wife, his three small children, or his youngest sister.

When describing the gruesome conditions of the prisoners during the voyage across the Aegean, John counted himself among a plural subject. It is a story of bad things that happened to 'us':

When we were about to set sail, the barbarians put leg irons on all of us and stuffed and crammed each and every one into the ships for all the world like some piece of inanimate matter. [...] They packed us in together so close to one another, so tightly pressed and so relentlessly squeezed that the entire multitude presented the single aspect of one continuous body.

Ἦδη δὲ τοῦ πλοῦς ἄρχεσθαι μέλλουσι στρέβλας τινὰς τοῖς ποσὶ πᾶσιν ἡμῶν ἐπιθέντες οἱ βάρβαροι, οὕτως καθ' ἓνα ταῖς ναυσὶν ὥσπερ ἄψυχόν τινα διστοίβασαν ὑλὴν [...] οὕτω γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἐπισυνῆψαν ὡς ἐν ἀδιάσπαστον ὄρασθαι σῶμα τὴν πληθὺν ἅπασαν, μηδ' ὄλωσ διισταμένην ἢ ἀπερρηγμένην τῆς συνεχοῦς ἐκείνης πιλίσεως.<sup>12</sup>

But while he used a first-person plural to describe conditions and situations, he did not say anything in the first-person singular about what he himself suffered. For example, he described the prayers one could imagine each person was saying privately:

One could hear how most of us were quietly bemoaning our native city and sense vaguely how in the privacy of his soul each one of us was crying out to God.<sup>13</sup>

ἦν δὲ ἀκούειν ὅπως ἡσυχῆ μόνον τὸ πλῆθος κατεστενάζομεν τῆς πατρίδος, καὶ πού τινα πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ἀφανεῖ τῆς ψυχῆς ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ἠφίει φωνήν.

This sentence could easily have been expressed in the first person, 'Then I silently cried in my soul out to God'. The choice to remove himself from the picture distanced John from the suffering. He continued to describe how the poor conditions affected the group:

We were afflicted by many other unpleasant forms of constraint such as hunger and thirst.... But the most painful constraint of all was gastric, which it was impossible to devise any means of dealing with, since the

business of nature must take its course and swiftly find an outlet. Many, preferring modesty in these matters tried to hold it in, and in their unavailing efforts endangered themselves.

εἶχε μὲν ἡμᾶς καὶ ἄλλων δυσχερῶν ἀνάγκη πολλῶν, τοῦ λιμοῦ, τῆς δίψης, [...] πλείω δὲ πάντων ἢ κατὰ τὴν γαστέρα χρεῖα, ἧς οὐκ ἦν οὐδεμίαν μέθοδον ἐφευρεῖν, τῆς φυσικῆς ἀνάγκης κατεπειγούσης πρὸς τὴν διέξοδον· τὴν γὰρ αἰδῶ τοῦ πράγματος πολλοὶ προτιμῶντες καὶ καρτερεῖν τὴν βίαν μὴ σθένοντες συχνῶς ἐκινδύνευον.<sup>14</sup>

With regard to this dehumanizing situation, John made a general, grammatically passive statement about nature and human physiognomy. He attributed unavailing agency to those who struggled against nature out of modesty. The implication of the passage is that everybody was affected by incontinence, but his writing works to record this as something that happened, without implicating anybody in the actual suffering of it.

The most striking example of this method is in the way John handled the death of his child during the voyage from Thessalonike to Crete. He noted there were 800 prisoners in his ship alone and more than 22,000 altogether.<sup>15</sup> During the long and overcrowded voyage, the enslaved people were given rotten bread to eat and small amounts of putrid water to drink. As a result people began to die:

[T]he bodies of the dying were flung overboard into the sea, where they lay a long time writhing on the surface of the waves, a situation in which luckless babes were marked out by their tender years for the fullest measure of suffering and pain and in which the plight of the living is not far removed from that of the dead.

καὶ γὰρ ἦν εἰκάσαι πλῆθος ἄπειρον ἐκ τούτων ἐφ' ἐκάστης τῆς ἡμέρας τῶ θανάτῳ συναυνόμενον, πάρεργον τῆς δίψης καὶ τοῦ λιμοῦ, τὰ τε σώματα τῶν θνησκόντων ἀκοντιζόμενα τῆς νηὸς ἐπὶ θάλασσαν καὶ μέχρι πολλοῦ τοῖς κύμασιν ἐπισπαίροντα, καὶ τούτων μάλιστα τὰ δείλαια βρέφη τῶ ἀτελεῖ τῆς φύσεως πλείω τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἀλγεινῶν ἐμφορούμενα, τοὺς ζῶντας δὲ πάλιν οὐ πόρρω τῶν προκειμένων ὑπάρχοντας, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ ὅμοιον βλέποντας πέρας.<sup>16</sup>

This description would prick the audience to feel compassion by describing the suffering of the captives. Only much later in the story did he reveal that his own child was one of those who died of thirst and hunger



during the voyage. When the convoy reached Crete, the captives were allowed out of the ships for a brief time during which they were able to mingle and find their relatives. John found his mother, wife, and two of his three children. He expressed no grief at the death of his child, but merely mentioned in passing that he found his wife ‘with two children (the third child had perished at sea)’.<sup>17</sup>

One explanation of this striking presentation is that it conforms to Greek rhetorical ideas of emphasis. In Greek, rhetoric emphasis was created by leading audiences to draw a particular conclusion on their own. Since people trust their own ideas more than what they are told by others, a point is made emphatically if audiences reach it themselves.<sup>18</sup> By setting up the members of the audience to have a moment of realization in which they recognize that the dying child tossed off the boat was indeed the author’s own child, John made the point more emphatically than if he had simply said his child had died.

Beyond the function of emphasis, however, the narrative avoids constructing John himself as the subject of pathos. He gave full voice to the horror he witnessed, etching scenes of pain into the minds of his audience, but without portraying himself as losing emotional control. He described in moving detail the scene on the beach at Crete, in which the captives tried to find their relatives:

Hapless women were wandering about with dishevelled hair and tear-stained eyes, looking around in every direction to see which of their children they would come across first. [...] But what of those [women] whose babies had perished at sea and who had no idea what had happened? How shall I describe their state of physical agitation? How, unable to restrain the tide of their emotions, they tore their clothes? How they would not keep still for a moment but wandered aimlessly around completely at the mercy of their own irrational impulses and casting glances in all directions in the hope that they might somewhere catch sight of their loved ones or contrive to hear from someone with first-hand knowledge of their fate and thus bring some relief to the anxiety that was preying on their minds?

And they put themselves to this routine many times over for two or three days until, when they were thoroughly exhausted, certain others of their acquaintance told them at last what had happened to those whom they were seeking, that their nearest and dearest had fallen victim often to hunger or thirst. At this news they made it plain that they felt their sorrow even more keenly, and saluted the dead with louder cries of lamentation and with other expressions of grief.

περιήρχοντο γοῶν αἱ δυστυχεῖς γυναῖκες, τὰς κόμας ἔχουσαι λελυμένας, πανταχοῦ περισκοποῦσαι καὶ διαβρόχους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς περιάγουσαι, τίνι τῶν τέκνων πρῶτον ἐντύχωσιν. [...] τί δ' ἂν εἴποιμεν περὶ τῶν ἄλλων, ὧν καθ' ὑδάτων τὰ βρέφη διόλωλε καὶ ἄδηλον ἦν αὐταῖς τὸ συμβάν, πῶς τῷ φυσικῷ συνείχοντο πάθει, πῶς διεσπάρατον τοὺς χιτῶνας, τὸν ἔνδον τῆς καρδίας μὴ ὑπομένουσαι κλύδωνα, πῶς οὐκ ἤθελον οὐδαμοῦ στῆναι, ἀλλὰ περιήρχοντο φερόμεναι μάτην ὑπὸ τῆς ἀλόγου τοῦ πάθους ὀρμῆς, τῆδε κάκεισε τὰ ὄμματα περιστρέφουσαι, εἴ ποῦ τινα τῶν ποθομένων θεάσαιντο ἢ τινος περὶ αὐτῶν ἀκριβῶς ἰδόντος ἀκούσοιντο, ἵν' ἐκεῖνον τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς φλεγμαῖνον κενώσῃ;

καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἔπραττον ἐπὶ δυσὶ πολλακίς ἢ καὶ τρισὶν ἡμέραις, ἕως πολλὰ καμουσῆσαι ἄλλοι τινὲς τῶν γνωρίμων τὸ περὶ τῶν ζητουμένων ἐδήλωσαν πέρας, λιμοῦ πολλακίς ἢ δίψης ἔργον τοὺς φιλιτάτους αὐτῶν γεγεννημένους· ἐξ οὗ δὴ καὶ μᾶλλον τὸ πάθος ἐξαγριάνασαι, γεγωνοτέρους θρήνοις καὶ ἄλλοις θλιβερῶν εἶδεσι τοὺς ἀποικομένους ἐφιλοφρόνουν.<sup>19</sup>

Once the audience learns several pages later that John's own wife lost one of their children during the voyage, it becomes clear that this generic description of unnamed women could well be an expression of the experience of John's own wife in searching for their son.

In John's description, only mothers searched for their children. They are described using a gendered vocabulary signifying their lack of emotional control: their hair is down; they are irrational; unable to control their impulses; they move frenetically; they scream and cry without restraint. There are no men in the scene. If we ask where the fathers and husbands were, we are led to imagine them as observing the mothers' distress, but men are entirely absent from the scene as John painted it. We know that in this culture childcare was the responsibility of women, and up until children began their formal education, around the age seven, their lives were lived within the domestic female sphere of the household.<sup>20</sup> So, it is possible that the fathers in fact did not help the mothers who were frantically searching for their children. It is also possible, and I think more likely, that John joined his wife in looking through the crowd for his lost child, but when he came to write about it, he created a double insulating wall between the rhetorical persona he constructed for himself in the text and the experience of extreme emotion. By portraying the search for children as something undertaken exclusively by the mothers, he did not implicate any of the fathers in this desperate, emotionally charged hunt. By describing the searching mothers

as an anonymous, abstract group, withholding the information that his wife was among them, he further separated himself from the emotions to which the mourning mothers were subject.

Similarly, in describing how the captives were again divided into different groups for eventual sale or ransom, John was vocal about the pain caused generally by the separation of families:

Everybody [...] was to be separated from his family all over again, so that people were simply herded together and then callously sorted out into convenient batches. But what account could do justice to the scale of this disaster? What orator could summon up sufficient eloquence to enumerate the many kinds and qualities of pain inflicted when nature herself was dismembered by this novel and outrageous order, her only crime being the common bond of blood and the inborn solidarity of kinship? Son was dragged away from father, daughter from mother, brother from brother.

τοὺς λοιποὺς δὲ τῶν συγγενικῶν συναφειῶν καὶ αὐθις διαιρεθέντας ἀναμιξ καὶ ἀδιαφόρως τοῖς κλήροις ἀποδοθῆναι. ἀλλὰ τίς λόγος τὸ μέγεθος τῆς συμφορᾶς ταύτης ἐκφράσοι; ποία δὲ γλῶσσα ῥητόρων ἐπέξελεθῆναι δυνηθεῖν τὴν ποικίλην ἐκείνην καὶ πολυειδῆ τῶν ὀδυνῶν κάκωσιν, ὅποτε καὶ αὐτὴ ἢ φύσις τῷ καινῷ τούτῳ καὶ παραλόγῳ προστάγματι εἰς πολλὰ κατετέμενετο, τοῦτο μόνον ἔγκλημα τὴν κοινωνίαν τοῦ γένους ἔχουσα καὶ τὴν ἔμφυτον τῶν ἐνωθέντων συνάφειαν; καὶ γὰρ ἀπεσπᾶτο πατρὸς μὲν υἱός, μητρὸς δὲ θυγάτηρ καὶ ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφοῦ.<sup>21</sup>

John appealed to the idea that great rhetorical skills would be needed to describe the various kinds of pain. He did not tell us what he himself felt or speak directly from his own experience. Only after describing the sale of some of the captives did he reveal that, ‘my brother’s wife was among those sold, an occurrence which caused us considerable anguish’ (‘ἐν οἷς ἔτυχεν ἐκδοθεῖσα καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἐμοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σύζυγος, οὐ μετρίαν ἡμῖν ὀδύνην περιποιήσασα’). He described his brother as ‘my piteous, wretched, miserable brother’, and noted that he, along with John’s wife, children, and sister, was to be shipped to Syria (‘ἐλεεινὸς ἄθλιος ὁ τλήμων ἀδελφός’).<sup>22</sup> Aside from this, he said nothing about the grief or the personal impact of the sale of his sister-in-law or of the separation from his wife and children, who were also shipped off. He pricked the audience to pity his brother, but not himself. Although he described scenes of intense sorrow, he depicted himself as essentially emotionless.

John separated the information that his wife, sister, children, and brother were placed on a ship going to Syria from the information that those ships were going to slave markets. In this, he avoided ever saying directly that his family was enslaved. The audience had to work to put the pieces together in order to figure out what happened to them. John, with his father and some of his brothers, was transported with other elite men to participate in an exchange of prisoners between the Roman Empire and the Abbasid Caliphate, which was to take place in Tarsos. Ostensibly, John wrote his narrative while he was being held in Paphos in Cyprus, where he and his brothers were detained in a house awaiting transport to Tarsos. John never mentioned his wife, sister, or children after the separation of prisoners on the beach at Crete.

John's passionless self-portrayal is best explained, I believe, not by assuming that it reflected a real callousness of character, but by seeing it as a way of rhetorically upholding his masculinity. Although he could not control his situation, he was able to control himself and his emotions. When control of emotions is seen as a definitional aspect of masculinity, John's rhetoric of emotional restraint can be understood as a way of holding onto his masculine dignity in the face of an emasculating and dehumanizing trauma.

In his descriptions of others, emotional restraint is linked with good character. In describing how the captives in Crete who were destined for sale in other places were loaded onto their ships, John emphasized that God gave them the ability to bear their misfortunes:

What must they all have felt in such a situation, when they were being led off to slavery in a foreign land, where the worship of our faith is treated as an abomination and the most senseless passions are revered. [...] At which first of all these ills did they beat their breasts? At which choice of evils would they not rather have chosen to hang themselves and do away with life itself? Yet they bore everything, for God provided the nobility of soul to cope with each eventuality and regulated every detail according to His will.

ἐν οἷς τί πάσχειν εἰκὸς τούτους ἅπαντας, ὅποτε πρὸς δουλείαν ἦγοντο εἰς γῆν ἀλλοτριαν, ὅπου τὸ μὲν σέβας τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς πίστεως ὡς ἐναγὲς ἐνυβρίζεται, πάθη δὲ τιμᾶται ἀλογώτατα, [...] τί πρῶτον τούτων ἀπάντων ἐκόψαντο; ἐν ποίῳ δὲ μὴ ἀγχόνην ἤρῃσαντο καὶ τὴν ζωὴν αὐτὴν ἀπηρνῆσαντο; ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔφερον πάντα, τὴν ἐπὶ πᾶσι μεγαλοψυχίαν παρεχομένου θεοῦ καὶ τῷ οικείῳ βουλήματι τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον μεθαρμόζοντος.<sup>23</sup>

Again John did nothing to remind the reader that his wife and children were among this group. He rhetorically wondered what they must have felt, rather than telling us what, if anything, his wife said she felt. The term used to describe nobility of soul, *megalopsychia*, greatness of spirit or magnanimity, had come to refer to emotional equanimity and forbearance by the medieval era and may have had particular connotations of emotional control when applied to women.<sup>24</sup> Here, it is clear that for John, it was a compliment to say that the victims had forbearance and patience.

John's text reflects the belief that women generally lacked emotional control, and he made a particularly strong connection between women and irrational behaviour in the face of difficulty. The women in his narrative are presented as subject to *pathos* in all respects. They respond to the imminent destruction of their city by losing all sense of decorum:

They insisted on crying out, on wailing, on embracing their children. Overwhelmed by grief, they no longer cared to observe the proprieties or to withdraw themselves from the sight of the men. On the contrary, they were completely unabashed. With their hair let down and with scant regard for modesty they performed dirges, crying out in unison, and groaned at the calamity. Wherever there was in the midst a maiden who had not yet left the protection of her home and was safely preserved for marriage and properly schooled in decorum, she would put aside all shyness at being seen, and in her fear not even considering that she was a woman, she would walk about in the middle of the market place, join the other women in their lamentation and shriek at the top of her voice.

Τί δὲ τῶν γυναικῶν εἶπω πρῶτον, οἷς καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν ἀέρα συνθρηνεῖν αὐταῖς ἐβιάζοντο; ἤτουν τὰς ἀνακλήσεις, τὰς οἰμωγὰς, τῶν τέκνων τὰς περιπλοκάς, οὐδ' εὐσχημονεῖν ἐτι βουλόμεναι νικηθεῖσαι τῷ πάθει, οὐδὲ τῆς ὄψεως τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἑαυτὰς ὑπεκκλίνειν, ἀλλ' ἀναιδῶς φερόμεναι, τὰς κόμας ἔχουσαι λελυμένας καὶ τῶν πρὸς συστολὴν ἀμελήσασαι, ἤγοντο συνεκβοᾶσαι τοὺς θρήνους καὶ τοῦ κινδύνου καταστενάζουσαι. εἴ που καὶ παρθένος ἐν αὐταῖς, ἢ μήπω τῆς οἰκουρίας προβάσα ἀλλ' ἀσφαλῶς τηρουμένη τῷ γάμῳ καὶ σεμνότητα πᾶσαν δεδιδαγμένη, τὴν αἰδῶ τῆς ὄψεως περιάρασα, καὶ μηδ' ὅτι γυνὴ τυγχάνει τῷ δέει λογιζομένη, διήει τῆς ἀγορᾶς ἐν μέσῳ, ταῖς ἄλλαις γυναιξὶ κοινωνοῦσα τοῦ θρήνου καὶ δεινὸν ἀλαλάζουσα.<sup>25</sup>

Here, John emphasized the breakdown of the social order precipitated by imminent destruction by describing women losing control.<sup>26</sup> Fear takes over young women and drives them to inappropriate behaviour.

The rules that were broken—that women should keep their hair covered, remain silent, and stay hidden within the home, out of sight of men—were all believed to uphold modesty and, hence, support the self-control of men and the natural androcentric order of society. By giving themselves over to their emotions, the women were disordering society and acting without any sort of restraint: they went outside with their hair down. This association of women with a lack of emotional control and irrationality reappears in his description of the distressed mothers searching for their children on the shores of Crete. There, John described the women as running around aimlessly, looking in different directions, at ‘the mercy of their own irrational impulses’, their hair dishevelled and tearing at their clothes.<sup>27</sup> These responses were presented as natural: when women are faced with grief, they become irrational. Unkempt hair and wandering eyes are symptoms of a lack of control as well as irrationality.

The descriptions of the disordered, unrestrained wailing of the women created a contrast with the men, who were also experiencing the deaths of their children, but who maintained their emotional control. By playing up the connection between women and lack of emotional control in the face of tragedy, John reinforced the ideal that men had that control. Emphasizing this aspect of his culture helped in his goal of appearing to retain his masculinity through his emotional control. After his capture and the sale of his wife, his self-control was all he had left of his masculinity.

John claimed that his most painful experience was when he and his fellow captives were paraded through the streets of Paphos while crowds jeered at them:

They brought us out too, as a sort of victory trophy, and paraded us in front of everybody and made a public display of our misfortune. How they shouted and jumped up and down when we reached the entrance to the city, openly gloating at our humiliation! It hurt us more than anything else, and we felt it unbearable that, so soon after all that we had been through, we should find ourselves subjected to such gross indignity.

προέφερον δὲ καὶ ἡμᾶς ἄγοντες καθάπερ τι τρόπαιον νίκης, ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἡμᾶς θριαμβεύοντες καὶ θέατρον ποιούμενοι τὴν καθ’ ἡμᾶς συμφορὰν. οἷον γὰρ ἀνέκραγον καὶ τοῖς ἐξάλλασιν ἐπεσκίρτησαν, ὅτε πρὸς αὐτῇ γεγόμενα τῇ εἰσόδῳ τῆς πόλεως, ἀφορμὴν θυμηδίας τὴν καθ’ ἡμῶν ὕβριν δεικνύμενοι. ὃ δὴ καὶ πλείω τῶν ἄλλων ὠδύνησεν ἡμᾶς, οὐκέτι φέροντας τῶν δεινῶν ἐκείνων καὶ τῆς ὑπερβαλλούσης αἰσχύνης τὴν ἐπαλληλίαν ὑφίστασθαι.<sup>28</sup>

We cannot tell whether this humiliation was really emotionally more affecting for John than the death of his child and the sale of his wife.<sup>29</sup> The claim that the insult to his honour was the worst thing he suffered works to construct John as a man concerned with and possessed of honour. That the insult to his dignity was felt so sharply told the audience that he was an honourable and dignified man.

The one scene in which John emerged as an actor who took centre stage was the moment when he, with his father and brothers, first bargained for their lives in the midst of the sack of the city. At the moment of confrontation, John stepped forward to address the approaching Ethiopians, who were slaughtering everyone in the vicinity. John caught their attention: ‘when they saw me setting out boldly of my own free will towards them, with neither armour nor defensive weapons but with something important to say they too approached’ (‘οἱ δ’ ἐπειδὴ οὕτω με θαρσαλέως πρὸς αὐτοὺς κατεῖδον αὐτομολήσαντα, ἄοπλον μὲν καὶ πρὸς ἄμυναν οὐδὲν ἐπιφερόμενον, ἔχοντα δὲ τι σπουδαῖον εἰπεῖν, ἐπήλθον καὶ αὐτοὶ’).<sup>30</sup> He explained that they would lose a lot of money by killing him and his brothers and pulled out some gold ornaments which he had in his cloak. His speech stopped the attack: ‘by the air of independence with which I spoke I managed for the moment to check the fury of the Ethiopian and induced him to stay his hand’ (‘Οὕτως ἔτυχον εἰπὼν, καὶ τῷ πεπαρρησιασμένῳ τοῦ σχήματος τὴν ὀρμὴν τοῦ Αἰθίοπος τέως πρὸς τὸ μὴ τὴν τομὴν ἐνεγκεῖν ἀνακόψας, τὴν λαϊὰν δὲ τῶν χειρῶν ἐγκρύψας’).<sup>31</sup> Negotiations were hampered by the lack of a mutual language but, ‘he did seem to be surprised at the confidence and determination with which I was making my point’ (‘ἢ μόνον ἐφαίνετο θαυμάζων τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τὸ σεσοφισμένον τῆς πληροφορίας παντὶ τρόπῳ κατενεργούμενον’).<sup>32</sup>

This moment of negotiation was a turning point in the text which led to John and his father and some of his brothers being held for ransom. It is the only moment in which John was able to exercise any independent agency. Here, he presented himself as acting in the first person because he has effective agency—he is heroic, brave, and successful in convincing the attackers to hold him and his father and brothers for ransom rather than kill them. Once this moment of heroic agency was over, and John was a helpless prisoner, he did not enter the action of his narration. Once he was a captive, he largely eschewed describing his actions in the first-person singular. He turned into a witness and a rhetorician who described the suffering of others. His active participation in this passage highlights his rhetorical absence from most of the subsequent story.

John's father was given a speech in which he spoke in lamentations in the first-person singular. Yet this speech also served to present the father as able to constrain his emotions in order to issue a strong moral lesson. During the sack of the city, John went with his father and two of his brothers to one of the towers so as to separate themselves from the crowd.<sup>33</sup> John's father spoke to his sons while they were hiding. John introduced the carefully constructed speech by explaining that his father was well practised in the art of eloquence.<sup>34</sup> In the first part, the father cried out against the inconsolable anguish of thinking that he would soon witness the deaths of his children. In the second part, he pulled himself together in order to deliver a moral and theological message for his children. In the transition between these two sections, he was explicit that the wailing and grief were responses that should be restrained, even if they were appropriate:

[B]ut, dear children, I have, without realizing it, strayed far from what I ought to have said and in giving vent to my grief have allowed myself to say what I ought not have said. I have been defeated by misfortune, and the general calamity has forced me against my will to cry out against the current situation. For who, even if he had a heart of stone, would not be carried away by his present suffering into bewailing his own involvement and that of his family and so overwhelming a catastrophe? But there is nothing that God wills and brings to pass among men which is not designed to serve some purpose.

Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔλαθον ἑμαυτόν, ὃ φίλτατα τέκνα, πόρρω τοῦ δέοντος πλανηθεῖς καὶ ἄπερ οὐκ ἔδει τοῖς θρήνοις συνεξιπών. νενίκημαι γὰρ τῷ κακῷ, καὶ ἡ πάνδημος συμφορὰ καταστενάξει τοῦ καιροῦ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ ἄκοντά με παρεβίασατο. τίς γὰρ ἂν καὶ λιθίνην ἔχων καρδίαν, τῷδε τῷ πάθει συνεπαρθεῖς, ἑαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἄμφ' αὐτὸν τοσοῦτον κακῷ συσχεθέντας μὴ ἀποδύρηται; ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ὃ βούλεται καὶ πράττει θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις μὴ πρὸς τι χρήσιμον τέλος οἰκονομούμενον.<sup>35</sup>

He then exhorted his sons to trust in God and to stand strong in the face of potential martyrdom: '[W]ith these words he sought to train us to endure death by the sword and inspired us to hope for martyrdom' ('ταῦτα λέγων ἕκαστον ἡμῶν πρὸς τὸν διὰ ξίφους θάνατον ἐπαιδοτρῖβει καὶ προθυμίαν παρεῖχε μὴ ἀπευδοκεῖν τὴν τελείωσιν').<sup>36</sup> The father became the voice of moral reflection and theological response to the tragedy. His explicit condemnation of his own lamentation marked it as



regrettable, even as it was identified as a natural response of anyone ‘even if he had a heart of stone’. John’s father thus both indulged in feminine lamentation and displayed his ability to master himself and control his feelings. His ability to stop the lamentation and make an appropriate theological argument displays his manly control over his emotions.

Even though his father’s momentary lapse into *pathos* was overcome in a way that showed the father’s ultimate control over his feelings, John never depicted himself as becoming subject to *pathos*. He only witnessed the grief and tragedy of others. His father’s fleeting moment of gender fluidity served to underscore just how affecting the situation was: the tragedy brought even a distinguished, pious old man to tears. Yet John’s need to uphold his masculinity required that he not depict himself as wavering for a moment from his rigid self-control.

By creating a persona of a silent, calm witness, John made himself trustworthy as an historian. The audience can trust him because he was not compromised by his emotions.<sup>37</sup> If he bewailed his own misfortunes, would we consider him an upstanding man whose words about what happened we should believe? By presenting himself as a man of extreme dispassion and self-control, John showed his good character and earned the trust of his readers.

By evoking emotions in his audience, John exercised control over his readers. The rhetorical power of his narrative in itself mitigated against his lack of political power. While disempowered by his capture, he was still able to exercise authorial power. Whatever he may have felt at the moment of the calamities he experienced, he was at least able to portray himself as maintaining control over his emotions. Through the force of his descriptions, he made the audience weep and feel pain. In forcing grief from his audience and maintaining control over his own, he gained the upper hand over his readers. We are moved to *pathos*, and hence weakened, while John is in control.

There is a stark contrast between John’s emotionless self-portrayal and Anna Komnene’s markedly emotional authorial persona. Whereas John suffered much and expressed little, if any, personal grief, Anna lived a life of privilege but expressed boundless grief. Anna, I believe, presented herself as grieving and piteous in an effort to provoke a favourable emotional response from her audience. For both Anna Komnene and John Kaminiates, the expression of emotion, or lack thereof, in the text was designed to work upon the emotional disposition of the audience so that readers would come to see the author as a person of good character.

Anna expressed great grief for her parents and husband at the beginning and at the end of her history, as well as at other strategic points in the text. Traditionally, her emotional outbursts in the *Alexiad* have been interpreted as a loss of control, that is, she simply could not help it: she really felt that aggrieved and so boiled over with feeling that it leaked all over her page. There is also a tradition of thinking that she was disingenuous about the cause of her passion: she *said* she was grieving for the loss of her husband and her parents, but she was *really* just angry that she could not be empress.<sup>38</sup> Scholars have not thought much about why she portrayed herself as grieving in the *Alexiad* because the grief, interpreted as anger, was explained by her political losses. Her expressions of grief prompted scholars to wonder what was wrong with her, and the story of her failed attempt to seize power provided a satisfying explanation. In fact, the story of the failed coup was largely invented as a means of accounting for why she was so upset.<sup>39</sup> This interpretive tradition does not treat Anna as a rhetorician who expressed emotion in a text for a particular purpose, but rather as a woman who was unable to control her feelings.

Yet Anna was a well-trained rhetorician. She knew just as much about classical writing as any of her contemporaries, and we are not justified in expecting her to just spew out whatever emotion she happened to be feeling at the moment that she was writing. Why assume that her lamentations were less calculated than John's ostentatious restraint? Nothing found its way into her text without her wanting it to be there. We therefore should not ask, 'what made her so hysterical', but rather, 'how was this display of emotion intended to affect the attitudes of her audience?' Once we understand the various roles Anna's emotionalism plays in her text, most of the reasons to think that she made an attempt to seize power in 1118 disappear. The habit of seeing Anna as bewailing her misfortunes because she was helpless to suppress her rage is but a modern version of the ancient assumption that women cannot control their feelings.

Once we begin to ask the right questions about Anna's displays of emotion, the answers come easily. In exercising authorial power and writing about the deeds of men in politics and war, Anna was breaking her culture's rules about female deference to male authority. Since the subject of Greek classicizing history was the deeds of men in the public sphere, she necessarily left the normal domestic sphere of women's interests when she studied history. Since history writing entailed evaluating

the actions and achievements of men, she put herself in the inappropriate position of a woman standing in judgement over men. Since history was best written through observation and the interrogation of witnesses, she had to break with the normative seclusion of women in the household and engage in conversations with men outside her family. Since women were only expected to have limited education, she had to claim a man's level of learning to be believable as an historian. Since the dispassion of the historian allowed readers to trust that he had been fair and even-handed in the presentation of the history, Anna had to demonstrate that she had masculine levels of emotional self-control. Yet, since modesty was among the greatest virtues for Byzantine women, anything she did to claim that she was educated, was an eyewitness to military events, had discussions with witnesses, or had the ability to judge character and evaluate politics merely made her seem more transgressive and self-aggrandizing.<sup>40</sup>

Anna deployed multiple rhetorical strategies for dealing with these challenges in her project of writing classicizing Greek history as a woman. To mitigate the criticism that a woman should not be concerned with politics and matters in the public sphere, she made the subject of her history her father, about whom she could claim appropriately domestic knowledge: for a princess, imperial politics and the household overlapped.<sup>41</sup> She claimed to be well educated, both overtly and through a display of her knowledge of ancient Greek rhetoric,<sup>42</sup> and said that she had travelled on campaigns, conducted archival research, and interviewed old soldiers who had participated in her father's battles.<sup>43</sup> She demonstrated her ability to be emotionally dispassionate by writing hundreds of pages of historical narrative in a detached style that fit the conventions of masculine history writing so perfectly that even modern scholars could think it was written by a man.<sup>44</sup> These strategies helped to substantiate her ability to write history, but they only exacerbated the sense that she transgressed the gender norms and ideals for feminine behaviour in her culture.

This situation created a strong need for Anna to appear to be both feminine and humble. Her displays of grief allowed her both to perform femininity and to offset her transgressive behaviour by humbling herself before her audience. Her lamentations functioned as moments when she was acting like a natural woman. Her grieving also constructed her as an object of pity so that her audience would have had a sense of condescending goodwill towards her, rather than anger at the

self-aggrandizement inherent in her project. When she acted the part of a poor old widow, she made the audience feel sorry for her, and hence superior to her. Her grieving was a humbling gesture that restored a more natural balance of power between a woman and an audience of educated male readers.

Whereas John's text calls on the audience to pity the poor people he is describing—but works hard to prevent the audience from pitying John himself—Anna constructed herself as an object of pity through outbursts of extravagant lamentation for her own suffering. She pushed her audience to feel sorry for her, even though she was demonstrating remarkable degrees of power and freedom for a woman. In some of these passages, she was ostensibly mourning the deaths of her parents and husband decades earlier. In others, it is entirely unclear what experiences of suffering caused the sorrow.

The key to understanding these moments of self-pity is not to try to uncover some actual cause of distress, but rather to observe the circumstances in the text of the *Alexiad* that seem to provoke them. The exclamations of self-pity appear whenever Anna is called upon to substantiate her skills, insist upon her credentials, or otherwise step outside the normal bounds of behaviour expected for an aristocratic woman of her culture. Whenever she let her audience see her break the cultural rules that governed the behaviour of good aristocratic women, she quickly moved to lamenting her misfortunes, hence provoking her audience to feel pitying condescension towards her. For example, in the prologue to her history, she made several boastful claims about the quality of her education, her noble parentage, and her ability to write without favouritism, as she made her case that she was competent to undertake historical writing. While they help establish her qualifications as an historian, these claims could easily have been seen as arrogant and immodest for a woman. She explained that her history continued the work of her late husband. Then quite suddenly she said:

At these thoughts my soul becomes filled with vertigo and I wet my eyes with streams of tears. Oh! What a councillor is lost to the Romans! [...] For my part, I have been conversant with terrible things since my birth in the purple as they say, and I have been assailed by ill fortunes, if one could reckon it not good and smiling fortune for me to be so born and a child of emperors and produced in the purple room. The rest full of waves! Full of turmoil! Orpheus moved stones and wood and even inanimate nature

simply with his singing; Timotheos the flutist once playing the martial tune to Alexander and immediately moved the Macedonian to weapons and the sword. The narratives about me are not the subject for movement to weapons and battle, but would stir the hearer to tears, and not only a sensitive one, but would even force *pathos* from inanimate nature.

ἐγὼ δ' ἐνταῦθα γενομένη σκοτοδίνης ἐμπίπλωμαι τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ρείθροις δακρῶν περιτέγγω τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. ὃ οἶον ἢ Ῥωμαίων ἀπόλωλε βούλευμα· ὃ πείρας μὲν ἀκριβεστάτης περὶ τὰ πράγματα καὶ ὅσιν ἐκεῖνος συνείλοχε, λόγων δὲ ἐπιστήμης, ποικίλης δὲ σοφίας, λέγω δὴ τῆς θυραίας καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας αὐλῆς· ὃ καὶ χάριτος ἐπιτρεχούσης τοῖς μέλεσι καὶ εἶδους οὐκ ἀξίου τυραννίδος, ὡς τινες λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ θειοτέρας καὶ κρείττονος. ἔγωγ' οὖν καὶ πολλοῖς ἄλλοις προσωμιλήκειν δεινοῖς ἐκ μέσων τῶν πορφυρόθεν σπαργάνων, ὡς οὕτως εἰπεῖν, καὶ τύχαις ἐχρησάμην οὐκ ἀγαθαῖς, εἰ μὴ τις θεῖτο τύχην οὐκ ἀγαθὴν καὶ προσμειδιῶσάν μοι τὴν τε γειναμένην αὐτὴν καὶ τὸν τεκόντα, τοὺς αὐτοκράτορας, καὶ τὴν πορφύραν ἐφ' ἧς ἐβλάστησα· τὰ γὰρ ἄλλα φεῦ τῶν κυμάτων, φεῦ τῶν ἐπαναστάσεων. Ὀρφεὺς μὲν οὖν ἄδων καὶ λίθους ἐκίνει καὶ ξύλα καὶ τὴν ἄψυχον ἀπλῶς φύσιν, Τιμόθεος δὲ ὁ αὐλητὴς τὸν ὄρθιον ποτε Ἀλεξάνδρῳ αὐλήσας εἰς τὰ ὄπλα παραχρῆμα καὶ τὸ ξίφος ἐκίνει τὸν Μακεδόνα· τὰ δὲ γε κατ' ἐμὲ διηγήματα οὐ τοπικὴν τινα κίνησιν οὐδὲ πρὸς ὄπλα καὶ μάχην, ἀλλ' ἐς δάκρυα τὸν ἀκροατὴν συγκινήσειε καὶ οὐκ αἰσθητικὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄψυχον φύσιν εἰς πάθος καταναγκάσειε.<sup>45</sup>

Anna never said what terrible things she experienced and acknowledged that some people would find it hard to believe that anyone born in the purple room had bad fortune. The point of the outburst, it seems, was not so much to explain the truth about her life, as to move her audience to pity the poor old widow. By calling on the audience to condescend to her misery, Anna counteracted the arrogance of her previous statements. By portraying herself as miserable and subject to great suffering, she humbled herself. By thus lowering herself in the eyes of her audience, she restored what her culture saw as the appropriate balance of power between genders by assuming the demure and deferential stance expected of women.<sup>46</sup> While her claims to education were aggrandizing and masculinizing, her lamentations were humbling and feminizing.<sup>47</sup>

Anna's discussion of her historical methodology in Book Fourteen similarly prompted extravagant expressions of grief that have little logical connection with the subject at hand. She broke with the convention in classicizing historiography of discussing her sources in the prologue, perhaps because she had already made a problematic number of immodest

statements in that section of her text. But near the end of her history, after having claimed that Alexios was in fact the greatest Roman emperor ever, she decided to argue for the accuracy of her history by explaining her methods to the audience. Here, she claimed to have learnt about her subject from autopsy, both by having travelled with her father and by having heard him and other generals discuss events at home. She also questioned old soldiers, discussed events with them, and collected texts and memoirs written by various combatants. Although excellent practices for an historian, these actions ran counter to the ideals of seclusion and modesty that governed the lives of Byzantine aristocratic women. Anna attempted to mitigate this transgressive behaviour by splicing in two separate asides in which she extravagantly bewailed unspecified tragedies that she had suffered and claimed complete isolation. These episodes of extreme lamentation do not have anything to do with historical methodology and cannot be seen as having been prompted by the emotional experience of discussing historical sources. Rather, they functioned to humble Anna and make her seem demure in the midst of discussions of immodest behaviour.<sup>48</sup>

Where she lamented, Anna acted like a woman. Her lamentations were the moments in which she performed normative femininity. In describing events which would have been expected to cause a woman to weep, she interrupted her dispassionate narration and momentarily adopted the posture of a grieving woman. For instance, when she had to mention the death of her brother Andronikos when describing a battle, she paused the military narrative for a moment of mourning:

As the barbarians fought with determination, the dearest of my brothers, the *porphyrogenetos* Andronikos, who was in command of the left, wheeled around and together with his troops violently fell on the barbarians. He was coming into the most gracious age of life; daring yet wise, and in war he had both physical skills and excellent judgement. Before his time he departed and, in a way that none expected he left us and went down, as the sun. Oh! Youth, and Flower of Body! How did you then plummet down from nimble leaps on horses? *Pathos* forces me to sing a monody for him, but the law of history pulls me back immediately. But it is to marvel how one does not become a stone or bird or tree or something else without a soul, just as they say happened of old, changing nature in these ways in response to great evils (whether it is a myth or some true story). And perhaps it would be better to transform my nature into something without feeling rather than feel so much evil. For if this were so, then quickly these horrible things would render me a stone.

Ὅς εἰς τὸ χαριέστατον αὐτὸ τῆς ἡλικίας ἐληλυθώς, τόλμαν δὲ συνετὴν καὶ χεῖρα δεξιάν καὶ φρόνησιν περιττὴν ἐν πολέμοις ἔχων πρὸ καιροῦ ᾤχετο καί, ὡς οὐκ ἂν τις ἠλπισεν, ἐξ ἡμῶν ἀπῆλθε καὶ κατέδυσεν. Ὡς νεότης καὶ ἀκμὴ σώματος καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἵππων ἄλματα κοῦφα ποῦ ποτε κατερρεύσατε; Μονῶδεν με τὸ ἐπὶ τούτῳ πάθος ἐκβιάζεται, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆς ἱστορίας νόμος ἐκεῖθεν αὐθις ἀπειργεῖ. Θαυμάζειν δὲ ἔστι πῶς οὐ γίνεται τις καὶ νῦν καθάπερ καὶ πάλαι, φησίν, ἢ λίθος ἢ ὄρνις ἢ δένδρον ἢ τι τῶν ἀψύχων ὑπὸ μεγάλων κακῶν εἰς τὰ τοιαῦτα τὴν φύσιν ἀμείβων, εἴτε μῦθος τοῦτο ἔστιν εἴτε λόγος ἀληθής. Καὶ τάχα κρεῖττον ἂν εἴη πρὸς τὰ μηδὲν αἰσθανόμενα μεταμειβεῖν τὴν φύσιν ἢ τοσαύτην αἴσθησιν δέχεσθαι τοῦ κακοῦ. Εἰ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἦν, τάχα' ἂν με λίθον ἀπέδειξε τὰ συμπεσόντα δεινά.<sup>49</sup>

In the next sentence, Anna went back to her dispassionate military narrative. She depicted herself as torn between the emotion that forced her to sing a monody and the task of writing history that required dispassion. Her return to the military narrative displays the clear victory of the laws of history over her emotions.

As a rhetorician in firm control of her discourse, Anna certainly could have omitted the monody at this point and narrated the death of her brother as that of any other soldier. When we consider the purpose it served for her to let her audience see her weep for her brother and recover her self-control, it becomes clear that she must have wanted them to think of her as a woman who mourned. Perhaps she was worried that she would be perceived as unnaturally cold if she could describe her brother's death in battle without an outburst of mourning and wanted to prove that she was subject to the depth of emotion her culture thought natural for a woman. Perhaps she was concerned that her history would be discounted or distrusted because it was written by a woman who could not be expected to control her emotions, and so she wanted to make a display of her emotional control by explicitly crying and then drying her eyes. The momentary pause for monody, followed by the resumption of dispassionate narrative, demonstrates her ability to both weep like a good woman and then dry her eyes to continue with a masculine level of self-control.<sup>50</sup>

While Anna portrayed herself as having what her culture thought was a normal female experience of *pathos*, she also claimed the extraordinary strength of character to be able to master her emotions like a man and write with the dispassion considered necessary for history. Her moments of emotional extravagance—brief interruptions in the long stretch of masculine historical discourse—are the ones in which she was acting like

a woman. Her dispassionate passages—nearly all of the text—conform to the conventions of Greek classicizing history. Historians in this tradition had to be dispassionate because their control over their emotions showed that they could be trusted to give an impartial account of what happened without favouring friends or letting their judgement be clouded by their emotional responses to events.<sup>51</sup> The requirement for authorial dispassion is one of the things that made history a masculine activity. To be a convincing historian, Anna needed to write persuasively with a masculine voice, and for nearly all of her history, she adopted the voice of a masculine historian successfully.

Anna's moments of deep emotionalism also helped to construct her as a reliable and authoritative historian because they helped her to look like a morally good woman. In exercising authorial power, she was breaking the rules about female deference to male authority. In portraying herself, through her grieving, as a humble and demure woman, she counteracted the transgressive nature of her enterprise and performed what her culture perceived as a normatively good role. She made herself an object of pity so that her audience would have a sense of condescending goodwill towards her, rather than anger at the self-aggrandizement inherent in her project. Her performances of emotion allowed her to be a good woman, just as her performance of masculine dispassion allowed her to be a good historian.

One conclusion of this study is that morally upstanding behaviour was equated with the performance of normative gender in Byzantine culture. For both Anna and John, good character was substantiated through the playing of proper gender roles. Both worked to craft positive authorial personas in their texts. For Anna, this meant presenting herself as subject to emotion, whereas for John, it meant presenting himself as personally unaffected by *pathos*. To be good, John needed to be a good man, just as Anna needed to be a good woman. Virtue was masculinity for men and femininity for women.

A second conclusion is that gender was performed, to a great extent, through the exhibition of appropriate degrees of emotion. Anna and John used emotion in opposite ways to better perform their normative genders. The contrast between them is stark, in that they used emotion to achieve contrasting results. Their methods, however, relied on a common understanding of the relationship between emotion and gender. He displayed masculinity through emotional self-control, even in the face of profound personal tragedy. She displayed both her femininity and her humility through expressions of extreme sadness.



Emotion was also tightly linked with power. Both texts used emotion to adjust the balance of power between author and audience. John's discourse provoked feelings of *pathos* in the audience towards those who suffered during the sack of the city. While a helpless captive, he yet became the masterful rhetorician who had the power to move his audience. The comparison with John accentuates how Anna's posture of subjection to *pathos* constructs her as powerless. It is not only a feminized stance, but a weak stance. A woman of great power, caught in the act of exercising an extraordinary degree of authorial power for a woman, needed to work against the self-aggrandizement of the project. By making herself seem subject to *pathos*, she constructed herself as powerless. In weeping, she ceded control to her readers, who were prodded to take on the condescending role of pitying the poor afflicted woman. John did not ask for pity for himself and worked hard to remove himself as an object of pity from his narrative, continually directing the pity of his audience towards others and away from himself. In contrast, pity was precisely what Anna wanted from her audience, as it substantiated her powerlessness.

We do not know if either John or Anna ever acted in anything like the ways they portrayed themselves in their texts. It is reasonable to doubt whether John callously watched from the sidelines as his wife ran around frantically looking for their lost child. Similarly, we can wonder whether the thought of her parents really sent Anna into paroxysms of grief thirty years after they had died. For both of them, however, we can be fairly certain that textually performing these emotions helped them appear to behave in a way that their culture thought was ideal. These performances then speak to that culture's norms and formal expectations for gender. Even though we can only see literary representations of gender, the rhetorical goals of the authors allow us to discern the gender ideals that were at play in their culture. In this culture, strong men resisted *pathos* and women were naturally subject to it.

## NOTES

1. Aglae Pizzone (ed.), *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions, and Identities* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014).
2. This model is most clearly articulated in: Stratis Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Eustratios N. Papaioannou, 'On the Stage of

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3. *Ioannis Caminiatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, ed. Gertrud Ries Böhlig, *CFHB* 4 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973); *John Kaminiates The Capture of Thessaloniki*, trans. David Frendo and Athanasios Fotiou, *Byzantina Australiensia* 12 (Perth: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2000).
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11. Frendo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 101; Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, 60.
12. *Ibid.*, 66 and 109.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Frendo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 67.
15. *Ibid.*, 121.
16. *Ibid.*, 113. Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, 68.
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18. Frederick Ahl, 'The Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome', *American Journal of Philology* 105 (1984): 174–208.
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20. Arietta Papaconstantinou and Alice-Mary Talbot (eds.), *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2009); Cecily Hennessy, *Images of Children in Byzantium* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008); Eve Davies, 'Age, Gender and Status: A Three-Dimensional Life Course Perspective of the Byzantine Family', in *Approaches to the Byzantine Family*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Shaun Tougher (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 153–76.

21. Frenzo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 121; Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, 72.
22. Ibid., 73 and 123.
23. Ibid., 72 and 121.
24. F.W. Sturz, *Etymologicum Graecae linguae Gudianum et alia grammaticorum scripta e codicibus manuscriptis nunc primum edita* (Leipzig: Weigel, 1818), 382. Μεγαλοψυχία ἔστιν ἀρετὴ ψυχῆς καθ' ἣν δύναται φέρειν τὴν εὐτυχίαν καὶ τὴν ἀτυχίαν, τιμὴν καὶ ἀτιμίαν· μικροψυχία δὲ ἐστὶ μακρὰ ψυχῆς καθ' ἣν ἀδύνατόν ἐστι φέρειν εὐτυχίαν. Plutarch used it to describe how Cornelia was able to talk about the deaths of her sons, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, without weeping. Nikephoros Bryennios used the same phrase to describe how Anna Dalassene was able to withstand the death of her oldest son: Leonora Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The 'Material for History' of Nikephoros Bryennios* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 155; Paul Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire: introduction, texte, traduction et notes* (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975), 1.12.19–24. Plutarch C. Cracch. 40.1.2.
25. Frenzo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 68–69; Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, ch. 38.
26. Messis, 'Le mémoire du "je" souffrant', 143.
27. Frenzo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 117–19.
28. Ibid., 129. Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, 77.
29. On this sort of ritually humiliating parade, see Messis, 'L'identité masculine à Byzance', 419–34.
30. Frenzo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 79; Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, ch. 46.
31. Ibid., 81 and ch. 47.
32. Ibid.
33. Frenzo and Fotiou, *John Kaminiates*, 73.
34. Ibid., 75–77. Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae*, ch. 43–45.
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36. Ibid., 77 and ch. 44.
37. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 128–74.
38. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 5–11, 153–74.
39. Eadem, 91–152.
40. Eadem, 15–29; John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
41. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 35–36; Ruth Macrides, 'The Historian in the History', in *Philellēn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. C.N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiōtakēs, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 205–24.
42. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 34–35.
43. Eadem, 79–88.

44. James Howard-Johnston, 'Anna Komnene and the Alexiad', in *Alexios I Komnenos*, ed. Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1996), 232–302; James Howard-Johnston, *Historical Writing in Byzantium*, Kieler Felix-Jacoby-Vorlesungen 1 (Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, 2014). Refuted in Diether Roderich Reinsch, 'Women's Literature in Byzantium? The Case of Anna Komnene', in *Anna Komnene and Her Times* (New York: Garland, 2000), 83–105; Ruth Macrides, 'The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the Alexiad?' in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000), 63–81; Leonora Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, 182–93.
45. *Annae Comnenae Alexias, pars prior prolegomena et textus*, ed. Diether R. Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, *CFHB* 40.1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), P4.1; my trans.
46. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 32–41.
47. On how telling a tale of woe could balance out power inequalities created by imposing one's speech on another, see Glenn W. Most, 'The Stranger's Stratagem: Self-Disclosure and Self-Sufficiency in Greek Culture', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 109 (1989): 114–33. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 61–90.
48. 14.7; Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 78–88.
49. Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 15.5.4; my trans.
50. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 61–74.
51. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 158–74.



## CHAPTER 4

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# Gendering Grief: Emotional Eunuchs—Consoling Constantine the Paphlagonian

*Shaun Tougher*

### INTRODUCTION

Emotions and eunuchs are both subjects in the field of Byzantine studies that have been receiving increasing attention in the twenty-first century.<sup>1</sup> This chapter brings these two important subjects together through the intersection of gender, exploring how the emotion of grief was gendered in relation to eunuchs. I analyse this through texts dealing with the grief of two specific eunuchs, texts which are thus valuable to focus on when exploring emotions and gender. The first eunuch is Eutropius, the grand chamberlain (*praepositus sacri cubiculi*) of the emperor Arcadius (395–408), and the second is Constantine the Paphlagonian, chief eunuch (*parakoimomenos*) of Leo VI (886–912) and then of Leo's widow, Zoe Karbonopsina, regent for her young son Constantine VII in the years 914–919. I consider the depiction of Eutropius in the poet Claudian's

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infamous invectives on him, focusing on the reaction of the eunuch to being ‘dumped’ by his master and lover Ptolemy.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Constantine the Paphlagonian, I analyse the two consolations addressed to Constantine by the patriarch Nicholas on the death of the eunuch’s sister early in the tenth century (c. 916), considering the depiction of the eunuch’s grief.<sup>3</sup>

Claudian’s invectives on Eutropius make great play with the gender identity of the eunuch as a means of attacking him, and include an arresting section in the first invective, where Eutropius laments his situation on being given away by Ptolemy. As consolations, Nicholas’s texts naturally deal with the emotion of grief and are significant in that the addressee is a eunuch. For these reasons, the case of Constantine receives more extensive attention than that of Eutropius. The consolations also deserve further study as despite Charis Messis’s recent monograph, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire*, which explores literary treatments of eunuchs, the consolations are not addressed as they do not identify Constantine explicitly as a eunuch.<sup>4</sup>

Claudian and Nicholas also form a neat pair as one is deliberately attacking a eunuch and the other is deliberately sympathetic to a eunuch. In the two case studies I analyse how Claudian uses the emotions experienced by a eunuch to contribute to the negative characterization of Eutropius, and I then explore how Nicholas constructs the emotional life of Constantine in relation to gender, in the broad context of such consolatory texts. I also use the texts of the two authors to ask further questions about the emotional lives of eunuchs, questions with which the authors themselves were not necessarily concerned. For instance, how did it feel for eunuchs not to be able to marry, not to be able to have children and to lose a sibling? The chapter demonstrates that emotion is a valuable avenue for analysing the construction of the gender identity of eunuchs and also for opening up questions about the reality of the lives lived by eunuchs in Byzantium.

### EUNUCHS, EMOTIONS, AND GENDER

It has been recognized that one of the defining features of the Byzantine Empire was the existence and use of eunuchs.<sup>5</sup> Eunuchs had a prominent role to play within the imperial court for most of its history from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, which only tailed off in the final centuries as the empire itself faltered. They also featured within the religious

life of the empire, as clergy, monks and saints. Whereas these are well-known facts, it is striking that the twenty-first century has marked a significant new interest in the subject of eunuchs: witness the publication of three major monographs in quick succession: Kathryn Ringrose's *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (2003), my own *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society* (2008) and Messis's *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire* (2014).<sup>6</sup> A key element in this recent work has been the question of the gender identity of eunuchs, which had understandably not concerned the earlier work of Rodolphe Guiland, for example, who focused on their offices and titles in Byzantine imperial society.<sup>7</sup> Ringrose led the way, arguing that in the middle Byzantine period eunuchs were constructed positively as a third gender. My own view is that there was a much more fluid construction of the gender identity of Byzantine eunuchs, with authors drawing on a range of negative, positive and neutral rhetoric. This has been echoed by Messis, who observes 'Au lieu d'une unité conceptuelle, il y a plusieurs images fragmentaires de l'eunuque', and that eunuchs formed 'une catégorie fluide entre les hommes et les femmes', though he argues that negative views of eunuchs were the norm in Byzantium.<sup>8</sup>

The consideration of eunuchs has had a longer history in Byzantine scholarship than these twenty-first century studies, but the concern with emotions in Byzantium is indeed a much newer field.<sup>9</sup> This is exemplified by the work of Martin Hinterberger, who has led the way. For instance, he contributed a chapter entitled 'Emotions in Byzantium' to Blackwell's *A Companion to Byzantium*, edited by Liz James and published in 2010. In this chapter he asserts that 'emotions are not a human constant, but [...] they differ depending upon culture and epoch', and that 'Byzantinists have paid little attention to the study of the emotions'.<sup>10</sup> This is clearly changing, however; witness, for instance, conferences held at the University of Edinburgh in 2013, Dumbarton Oaks in 2014 and Nicosia in 2017. The Edinburgh conference, the Eighth A. G. Leventis Conference in Greek, was entitled *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and After*.<sup>11</sup> The Dumbarton Oaks conference had the title *Managing Emotion: Passion, Emotions, Affects, and Imaginings in Byzantium*.<sup>12</sup> The conference in Nicosia was part of a Leverhulme Trust-funded network on *Emotions through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium*.<sup>13</sup> Hinterberger's place within the field is emphasized by the fact that he was a speaker at all three of these major conferences. He did



not, however, touch on gender in relation to emotion in his chapter in the Blackwell Companion. Thus there is great scope and need for work on this aspect of the study of Byzantine emotions. Emotions are certainly relevant to the question of the gender identity of Byzantine eunuchs; as Ringrose has remarked, for instance, eunuchs could be thought of as akin to women in their lack of emotional control.<sup>14</sup>

### THE GRIEF OF EUTROPIUS

Both Eutropius and Claudian came to prominence in the particular political circumstances of the empire following the death of Theodosios I in 395.<sup>15</sup> Leaving the empire divided between his two young sons—the teenage Arkadios in the East and the ten-year-old Honorius in the West—led to rivalry between the eastern and western courts, which characterizes the period. Given the youth of the sibling emperors, officials at their courts exercised power.<sup>16</sup> In the West the half-Vandal general Stilicho had been left by Theodosios as guardian of Honorius, but he also claimed guardianship (and thus dominion) over Arkadios and the East. This was resisted by the eastern court, and Stilicho was even branded a public enemy. In the war of words between East and West a crucial figure was the poet Claudian, who acted as a ‘propagandist’ (through panegyric and invective) of the western court, or rather of Stilicho. Claudian wrote invectives on leading officials of the eastern court, first Rufinus, the praetorian prefect, and then the eunuch Eutropius, the grand chamberlain of Arcadios, who had come to the fore under Theodosios. Claudian produced two notorious attacks on Eutropius, which are the subject of Jacqueline Long’s memorably titled book *Claudian’s In Eutropium: Or, How, When, and Why to Slander a Eunuch* (1996). These invectives were written in the aftermath of Eutropius being designated consul for 399; the first after the announcement of the honour and the second soon after in 399 when he had fallen from favour in the East and been exiled to Cyprus, which was quickly followed by his recall and execution. These texts supply rich material for the study of gender, for they address explicitly the gender identity of Eutropius, of course with the objective of attacking his character. The eunuch is depicted as both male and female, but also as a third gender, being neither male nor female.<sup>17</sup> It is the intersection of gender and emotion that I explore here, for in a section of the first invective Claudian deals with the emotion of grief felt by the eunuch.

In presenting the progress of Eutropius's career as a slave, from being castrated as a boy to ending up as grand chamberlain, Claudian relates an episode where the eunuch has been given away by his master Ptolemy, who had become 'tired of Eutropius' long service to his lusts [...] he is no longer worth keeping nor old enough to be bought' ('hic longo lassatus paelicis usu/[...] neque enim iam dignus haberi/nec maturus emi').<sup>18</sup> Claudian has Eutropius grieve for the loss of his master lover and his changed circumstances, presenting the eunuch as a wife who is being divorced by her husband:

How the scorned minion wept at his departure, with what grief did he lament that divorce! 'Was this thy fidelity, Ptolemy? Is this my reward for a youth lived in thine arms, for the bed of marriage and those many nights spent together in the inn [stable]? Must I lose my promised liberty? Leav'st thou Eutropius a widow, cruel wretch, forgetful of such wonderful nights of love?

Cum fastiditus abiret,/quam gemuit, quanto planxit divortia luctu!/  
haec erat, heu, Ptolomaeae, fides? hoc profuit aetas/in gremio consumpta  
tuo lectusque iugalis/et ducti totiens inter praesaepia somni?/libertas  
promissa perit? viduumne relinquis/Eutropium tantasque premunt oblivia  
noctes/crudelis?<sup>19</sup>

Long remarks that 'Eutropius laments the "divorce" in a hilarious burlesque of the deserted woman of elegy and epyllion', and that the eunuch's speech begins with 'melodramatic anguish'.<sup>20</sup> However, Claudian also has Eutropius lament his situation not just like a woman but as a eunuch; there are distinctive aspects to his experience because of his distinct physical nature. Eutropius continues:

How hard is the lot of my kind! When a woman grows old her children cement the marriage tie and a mother's dignity compensates for the lost charms of a wife. Me Lucina, goddess of childbirth, will not come near; I have no children on whom to rely. Love perishes with my beauty; the roses of my cheeks are faded. What wits can save my wretched back from blows? How can I, an old man, please?

Generis pro sors durissima nostri!/femina, cum senuit, retinet conubia  
partu,/uxorisque decus matris reverentia pensat./nos Lucina fugit, nec  
pignore nitimur ullo./cum forma dilapsus amor; defloruit oris/gratia: qua  
miseri scapulas tutabimur arte?/qua placeam ratione senex?<sup>21</sup>

The grief of Claudian's Eutropius is thus bound up with his gender identity as woman-like but also as specifically eunuch. Eutropius laments like a wife who is divorced by her husband when she has lost her youth and sexual attractiveness. However, as a eunuch he laments the fact that unlike a woman he cannot even experience the comfort of children since it is impossible for him to have any. No doubt Claudian's Eutropius was intended to cut an absurd and pathetic figure, but the intensity of his emotional response to being passed on by Ptolemy is striking, and a modern audience might be more inclined to sympathize with him at his plight rather than laugh at him. Thus although Claudian is mocking Eutropius, he does allow us to think about the precariousness of the lives of eunuchs as slaves and court officials; they were entirely at the whim of their owners and could be sold on, given away, exiled, even killed. Such circumstances must have had an impact on their emotional lives. Claudian also has the merit of raising the significant topic of the childlessness of eunuchs: they were not able to have children so could never be fathers. We should consider the emotional impact this had on eunuchs. Deeper consideration of the emotional lives of eunuchs will also come to the fore when we move from the fourth to the tenth century and examine the consolations that the patriarch Nicholas wrote for Constantine the Paphlagonian on the death of his sister. These were ostensibly sympathetic treatments of a eunuch's grief in contrast to Claudian's mocking treatment of Eutropius's grief.

#### THE GRIEF OF CONSTANTINE THE PAPHLAGONIAN

Constantine the Paphlagonian was the leading court eunuch in the early tenth century, from 908 to 919.<sup>22</sup> He came to prominence under Leo VI (886–912), having been gifted to the emperor's partner then wife Zoe Karbonopsina by another court eunuch, the Arab Samonas, who was Leo's *parakoimomenos*.<sup>23</sup> When Samonas fell from favour Constantine quickly took his place, becoming *parakoimomenos* in 908. Following the deaths of Leo in 912 and his brother Alexander in 913, Constantine held a key place in the regency for Leo's son Constantine VII established by the young emperor's mother Zoe Karbonopsina in 914.<sup>24</sup> Zoe had had to exert herself to secure this position, which was at the expense of the patriarch Nicholas. It was Nicholas who wrote consolations for the eunuch Constantine on the death of his sister in about 916.<sup>25</sup> It is likely that this sister was the wife of a leading member of the elite at the time,

the general Leo Phokas, a marriage that reflected Constantine's political importance during that period.<sup>26</sup>

As a form of literature, consolations are obviously vital to consider in relation to the emotion of grief. They are also revealing about concepts of gender. In his valuable article on 'The Byzantine Letter of Consolation in the Macedonian and Komnenian Periods', Antony Littlewood studies such texts as literature but also addresses the subject of gender.<sup>27</sup> He remarks on the idea that women were thought to be more prone to grief, given their lack of emotional control, and the concomitant view that men had to set women an example by controlling grief. For instance, he makes several interesting observations about letters of Photios, the famous ninth-century intellectual and patriarch. Photios wrote to his brother Tarasios on the death of his daughter (*Ep.* 234), urging his brother 'not to give way to lamentation, for men must set a good example to women, or where will they get their comfort? [...] We must not act like women'.<sup>28</sup> Photios's letter to the abbess Eusebia on the death of her sister (*Ep.* 245) is 'devoted entirely to deploring excessive lamentation' (Littlewood also notes the startling fact that of Photios's surviving 299 letters this was the only one written to a woman).<sup>29</sup> Let us now turn to the consolations for Constantine to explore what they reveal about issues of grief and gender in relation to a eunuch.

Nicholas wrote the consolations for Constantine following the death of his sister (*Ep.* 47). Two consolations exist, and it is generally thought that the shorter one was an unfinished draft or first version and the longer one the revised text.<sup>30</sup> Understanding the relationship of the texts to one another has been complicated by the manuscript tradition. The tenth/eleventh-century manuscript *Patmos 178*, the sole independent MS containing the collected letters of Nicholas, has the first consolation combined with the end of the second, whereas the eleventh-century manuscript *Vienna Phil. gr. 342* just includes the second consolation.<sup>31</sup> The shorter one consists of 52 lines in the edition of Nicholas's letters by Romilly Jenkins and Leendert Westerink.<sup>32</sup> It is more personal in character, with a more pronounced focus on grief. The longer text (84 lines) is more measured in character and focuses on Constantine not needing to grieve as his sister has gone to a better place.<sup>33</sup> I analyse the individual texts further.

The first consolation begins with the 'bitter grief' ('τὸ πικρὸν ἄλγος') of Constantine at the unexpected death of his sister. It also considers the

impact of the death on the wider family and friends. The degree of the grief is remarked upon, and the young age of the deceased is emphasized. The effect of the death on various family members is addressed in turn: the youthful husband, her brother the ‘tender-hearted’ (‘τὸν συμπαθῆ τρόπον’) Constantine, and the mother, who has been deprived of her fellow-female child and of becoming a grandmother. The fact that the grief extends beyond the family is also made clear, its effect on Nicholas himself being included. After it establishes the intensity and impact of the grief, the text then turns to the subject of recovery from grief, noting that death is just part of human life and is part of God’s plan; this provided Nicholas with some relief and solace from grief. It is anticipated that the sister will go to heaven. Thus Nicholas hopes Constantine has been consoled too. Grief is natural, but also must end.

The second consolation begins with the fact that Constantine is suffering grief (‘ἀλγεῖν’) as he is tender-hearted and loved his sister, and Nicholas sets out to lift him out of his gloom knowing that as much as Constantine loves his family he is ‘even more devoted to God’. He asserts that their sister has gone to God; in heaven ‘she has found her father and a host of other relatives’. Nicholas declares that her ‘repose and the griefless (‘ἀλύπου’), painless existence which she enjoys’ should not seem to be envied by those left alive. She would not take their mourning as a sign of love for her; they should be happy for her. Death is a fact of life. It is ordained by God. This is reflected in nature: the sun can be eclipsed, flowers bloom and fall, plants lose their leaves and fruits, and animals die. They should end their grief, accept ‘the Judgements of God’, and give thanks for the life she did have and for the fact that she is now in a better place; she deserves ‘not to be bewailed, but rather to be envied and called blessed’.

In contrast to Claudian’s invectives on Eutropius, Nicholas’s consolations do not explicitly engage with the gender identity of Constantine as a eunuch. To be sure Constantine was suffering from grief, but so were other family and friends, including Nicholas himself. It was Constantine’s mother who was the subject of the most obvious comment on gender: as a woman she missed her fellow-female child and was deprived of fulfilling the role of a grandmother.

Yet perhaps there is more here than meets the eye. Let us consider further the fact that two consolations exist. As noted above, it is usually thought that the shorter text was a draft and the longer text the finalized version. The brief commentary of Jenkins and Westerink remarks

on the nature of the first consolation and suggests that ‘it was probably left unfinished because of the negative tone of its first paragraph’.<sup>34</sup> Littlewood has commented further on this: he argues that given the tense political relations between Nicholas and Constantine, the patriarch ‘probably found this letter rather hard to write’, and that before sending the first version he ‘had the good sense to realize that he had gone too far and that his protestations [of grief] would smack of insincerity. [...] Accordingly, he composed and sent a more restrained and dignified letter of condolence that was less likely to jar on the sensibilities of the chamberlain’.<sup>35</sup>

One wonders though why the first version would have survived; this puzzled both Jenkins and Jane Mitchell.<sup>36</sup> Littlewood suggests survival by sheer chance, but this feels unsatisfying. Could it in fact be that Nicholas wrote to Constantine twice? Certainly the two texts have different characters but we do not have to appeal to awkward political circumstances to explain this fact; the different characters could be understood in relation to different audiences and/or contexts. Further, perhaps there is the danger of reading too much of the personal dynamics between Nicholas and Constantine into the texts and of assuming too much about how they felt about one another; as patriarch Nicholas still had religious, social, and political roles to play during the regency of Zoe, and the Byzantines were pragmatic enough to engage in social relations when necessity obliged them to do so. As David Scourfield has observed in his commentary on Jerome’s consolation of Heliodorus, ‘To offer consolation to those afflicted by grief is an act naturally human, in which the barriers erected between individuals in consequence of personal enmity or social difference or any other circumstance that tends to separate are readily broken down’.<sup>37</sup> Steven Runciman memorably remarks ‘though [Nicholas] and [Constantine the Paphlagonian] were enemies of long standing, when the Paracoemomene’s sister died he condescended to write him a charming letter of condolence’.<sup>38</sup>

If we further consider the possibility that the texts had different audiences and/or contexts, as has already been noted the first text seems much more personal, with its focus on family and friends and specific individuals being named (husband, brother, mother, Nicholas) and its much more intense depiction of grief. The second text, as also already noted above, is much more formal and controlled, with greater emphasis on recovery from grief. Could it be that the first text followed very soon after the death of the sister and was aimed primarily at the family,

which would explain its more personal character? Perhaps the second text was written a short time later and for a more public audience or occasion. Constantine is much more in focus as the primary recipient of this letter and so is the message of recovery; the Christian sentiment is also much more explicit, with Constantine being said to love God more than his family. Thus we could be dealing with two separate texts tailored for specific moments and audiences. This might also raise the additional possibility that Nicholas was making a particular point about the excessiveness of Constantine's grief: he needed two consolations to bring him to recovery. Perhaps Nicholas was making a gender comment after all. Certainly in both consolations Nicholas remarked on the tenderheartedness of Constantine, which might be suggestive of a proclivity on the part of the eunuch to feel overly emotional. It is notable that in both texts Nicholas is the one urging and feeling recovery, having experienced grief himself, whereas Constantine has yet to embrace the message. The patriarch certainly does not draw on the rhetorical strategy of asserting that Constantine was a man and thus able to control himself.

#### EMOTIONAL EUNUCHS: THE LESSONS OF EUTROPIUS AND CONSTANTINE

When we consider the texts of Claudian and Nicholas together it is clear that they have different contexts and characters. One author was writing at the end of the fourth century CE and the other in the early tenth century. One was writing invective and the other consolation. One wrote in Latin and the other in Greek. One wrote as a court poet and the other as the archbishop of Constantinople. In Claudian's time eunuchs were still primarily imported foreign slaves, whereas in Nicholas's time they tended to be native Byzantines and to have social ties within society. In the invective, gender is a key way for Claudian to attack the eunuch Eutropius, and this feeds into how he depicted the eunuch's reaction to being cast off by his master lover as a divorced wife and childless eunuch. Nicholas's texts are ostensibly positive and the gender identity of Constantine is not obviously to the fore, though it may lurk beneath the surface. Claudian was mocking the emotional responses of Eutropius, whereas Nicholas was sympathizing and encouraging Constantine to come to terms with his grief and move on from it.

Thus the texts of Claudian and Nicholas had particular purposes which need to be understood and which affect how they characterize

the emotions of particular eunuchs. I would argue, however, that in the study of Byzantine emotions and gender we can utilize the texts further and ask ourselves additional questions about the emotional lives of eunuchs, even if the authors were not necessarily interested in those questions. Fundamentally, we should consider emotions from the point of view of the eunuchs themselves. One of the problems in studying and understanding Byzantine eunuchs (and eunuchs in general) is that we tend to lack their voices; they are usually objects rather than subjects.<sup>39</sup> As was seen, however, although Claudian mocked Eutropius, he allows us to ask questions about the precariousness of the lives of eunuchs and the emotional impact this had upon them. Claudian highlighted a particular plight of eunuchs, that is, that they could not become fathers. This fact also has to be considered in the case of Constantine the Paphlagonian. Nicholas was consoling the eunuch for the death of his sister, but we should stop to remember that Constantine would never have a wife or biological children to lament. Given these facts, it is likely that the bonds between eunuchs and their siblings would have been more intense: through his sister Constantine had the possibility of having nephews and nieces, who would be the closest he could get to having children of his own, barring adoption. It is clear that Byzantine eunuchs could have close ties with the children of their siblings, with the uncle-nephew relationship being particularly pronounced.<sup>40</sup> Thus Constantine's grief may indeed have been intensified for this reason.

Here it is worth discussing a very intriguing consolatory letter also touched on by Littlewood.<sup>41</sup> This is a letter written in the mid-tenth century by Theodore the bishop of Nicaea to console a certain Leo the *protospatharios* on the death of his mother.<sup>42</sup> Theodore remarked on the intensity of the grief of Leo, who had been living with his mother, herself a widow for about forty years; it is noted that Leo had no father, wife, or children to console him. This might suggest that Leo had never married; could he have been a eunuch? Littlewood does not consider this, nor does the *Prosopographie der mittel-byzantinischen Zeit*, but it must be a real possibility. This case highlights the fact that if authors did not identify their subjects as eunuchs, or identify themselves as eunuchs, how can we know if they were eunuchs? The only reason we know that Constantine was a eunuch is that we have other information about him; it is not explicitly stated in Nicholas's consolations. If we did not know that Constantine was a eunuch we might possibly suggest it on the grounds that his grief for the death of his sister was so intense and that



no wife or children are mentioned, only his mother, brother-in-law and friends. We can also remark on the fact that despite Theodore asserting that there was a lack of familial support for Leo, it emerges that he did have a brother who needed consoling. This indicates that he was younger than Leo.<sup>43</sup> Thus Theodore urged Leo to curtail his own grief to care for his sibling.

Returning to the grief of Constantine, one can wonder too if other cheated hopes might have affected him: if indeed this sister was the wife of Leo Phokas her death would have marked a major setback in his plans to cement significant social and political ties by uniting with a distinguished and important military family. Thus texts such as those of Claudian and Nicholas can be studied for their specific content but should also be utilized as a way to think about wider issues involved in the emotional lives of Byzantine eunuchs.

This is not to say, however, that the Byzantines themselves did not think about such issues. This can be illustrated by the example of Emperor Leo VI. Although the emperor in his *Novels* upheld the ban on eunuchs marrying on the grounds that the purpose of marriage was to have children (*Novel* 98), he did allow them to adopt (*Novel* 26).<sup>44</sup> Explaining his decision, Leo remarked on the joy (as well as utility) that children bring to mankind, and he considered that it was not just or humane (‘φιλάθρωπον’) to ban eunuchs from adopting.<sup>45</sup> He realized that adoption was the only means by which eunuchs could become fathers. Thus some Byzantines might think about the emotional life of eunuchs, and so should we.

## NOTES

1. See below for identification and discussion of leading studies.
2. For an edition and translation of the invectives see Maurice Platnauer, *Claudian*, vol. 1 (London and New York: William Heinemann and G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1922), 138–229.
3. For an edition and translation of the consolations see Romilly J. H. Jenkins and Leendert G. Westerink, *Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1973), 266–74.
4. Charis Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire* (Paris: Centre d’études byzantines, néo-hellénique et sud-est européennes, 2014).
5. See, for instance, Shaun Tougher, *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

6. A further monograph is promised by Georges Sidéris, who has also published articles on eunuchs, e.g. Sidéris, “‘Eunuchs of Light’: Power, Imperial Ceremonial and Positive Representations of Eunuchs in Byzantium (4th–12th Centuries AD)”, in *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*, ed. Shaun Tougher (London: Duckworth and The Classical Press of Wales, 2002), 161–75.
7. See, e.g. Rodolphe Guiland, ‘Les eunuques dans l’empire byzantine. Étude de titulaire et de prosopographie byzantines’, *Revue des études byzantines* 1 (1943): 197–238; *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Akademie Verlag, 1967).
8. Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance*, 362, 365.
9. For recent research on either gender or emotions in Byzantine culture, see also this volume’s introductory chapter.
10. Martin Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Chichester and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010), 123.
11. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/history-classics-archaeology/news-events/events-archive/events2013/leventis-2013>, accessed 11.9.2017.
12. <https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/scholarly-activities/managing-emotion-passion-emotions-affects-and-imaginings-in-byzantium>, accessed 11.9.2017.
13. <http://emotions.shca.ed.ac.uk/final-conference-emotions-through-time-nicosia-27-29-september-2017/>, accessed 11.9.2017.
14. Kathryn M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 36, 52, 75.
15. For the general context see, for instance, John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364–425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); J. H. Wolfgang G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). For Eutropius see, e.g. John R. Martindale, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 2, AD 395–527 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), Eutropius 1, 440–44; James E. Dunlap, ‘The Office of the Grand Chamberlain in the Later Roman and Byzantine Empires’, in *Two Studies in Later Roman and Byzantine Administration*, ed. Arthur E. R. Boak and James E. Dunlap (New York and London: Macmillan, 1924), 272–84. For Claudian, see Alan Cameron, *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970); Catherine Ware, *Claudian and the Roman Epic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). See also Shaun Tougher, ‘Eunuchs in the East, Men in the West? Dis/Unity, Gender and Orientalism in the Fourth Century’, in *East and*

- West in the Roman Empire of the Fourth Century. An End to Unity?*, ed. Roald Dijkstra, Sanne van Poppel, and Daniëlle Slootjes (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 147–63.
16. For the issue of child emperors in this period see Meaghan A. McEvoy, *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367–455* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
  17. In addition to Jacqueline Long, *Claudian's In Eutropium: Or, How, When, and Why to Slander a Eunuch* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), see also Shaun Tougher, 'Two Views on the Gender Identity of Byzantine Eunuchs', in *Changing Sex and Bending Gender*, ed. Alison Shaw and Shirley Ardener (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), 64–66.
  18. Claudian, *In Eutropium* 1.62–64. The translation is that of Platnauer, *Claudian*.
  19. Claudian, *In Eutropium* 1.64–71.
  20. Long, *Claudian's In Eutropium*, 123.
  21. Claudian, *In Eutropium* 1.71–77.
  22. For Constantine, see, e.g. Ralph-Johannes Lilie et al., *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Zweite Abteilung (867–1025)* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), #23820 (Konstantinos Barbaros), Romilly J. H. Jenkins, 'A "Consolatio" of the Patriarch Nicholas Mysticus', *Byzantion* 35 (1965): 159–66; Shaun Tougher, *The Reign of Leo VI (886–912): Politics and People* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 200–201. On Constantine's father Metrios, see now Mesis, *Les eunuques à Byzance*, 183–86.
  23. For Samonas, see, for instance, Tougher, *Reign of Leo VI*, 197–99.
  24. For Zoe's regency, see, for instance, Lynda Garland, *Byzantine Empresses: Women in Power in Byzantium, AD 527–1204* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 118–23; Steven Runciman, *The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and His Reign: A Study of Tenth-Century Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), 45–62.
  25. For Nicholas and his letters see Jenkins and Westerink, *Nicholas I*, but see also the remarks of Margaret E. Mullett, 'The Language of Diplomacy', in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1992), 211–12; Peter Hatlie, 'Redeeming Byzantine Epistolography', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 20 (1996): 239–40.
  26. For Leo Phokas, see, for instance, Jean-Claude Cheynet, 'Les Phocas', in *Le traité sur la guerilla (De velitatione) de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas (963–969)*, ed. Gilbert Dagron and Haralambie Mihăescu (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1986), 296–27; Runciman,

- Romanus Lecapenus*, 54–61. The roles of the eunuch Constantine and the general Leo Phokas in the regency are also noted by the Western author Liudprand of Cremona: *Antapodosis* 3.26.
27. Antony R. Littlewood, ‘The Byzantine Letter of Consolation in the Macedonian and Komnenian Periods’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999): 19–41. On mourning (*penthos*) in Byzantium, see, for instance, the remarks of Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, 129–30.
  28. Littlewood, ‘Byzantine Letter of Consolation’, 25.
  29. Littlewood, ‘Byzantine Letter of Consolation’, 25 and n. 37.
  30. For previous comment on the nature of the texts see Jenkins, ‘A “Consolatio”’; Jane F. Mitchell, ‘A “Consolatio” of the Patriarch Nicholas Mysticus—Further Remarks’, *Byzantion* 37 (1967): 136–42; Littlewood, ‘Byzantine Letter of Consolation’, 27.
  31. Jenkins and Westerink, *Nicholas I*: xxxi–xxxiii, and 548 (‘P contains I+II, 60–84, V contains II, 1–84’).
  32. Jenkins and Westerink, *Nicholas I*, 266–70.
  33. Jenkins and Westerink, *Nicholas I*, 270–74.
  34. Jenkins and Westerink, *Nicholas I*, 548.
  35. Littlewood, ‘Byzantine Letter of Consolation’, 27.
  36. Jenkins, ‘A “Consolatio”’, 166; Mitchell, ‘Further Remarks’, 142.
  37. J. H. David Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus: A Commentary on Jerome, Letter 60* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 15.
  38. Runciman, *Romanus Lecapenus*, 53.
  39. There can be some exceptions to this: see, for instance, Tougher, *The Eunuch*, 111–15, and Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance*, 234–37.
  40. See, for instance, Tougher, *The Eunuch*, 65–66.
  41. Littlewood, ‘Byzantine Letter of Consolation’, 29.
  42. For the text, see Jean Darrouzès, *Epistoliers byzantins du Xe siècle* (Paris: Institut Français d’Études Byzantines, 1960), 276–77. For Leo, see also Lilie et al., *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, #24425 (Leon).
  43. This case puts one in mind of another tenth-century pair of brothers, Leo and his brother Constantine, who were depicted in the famous tenth-century Leo Bible. Leo was a eunuch and *sakellarios* who produced a Bible for his brother’s monastery of St. Nicholas: see, for instance, Tougher, *The Eunuch*, 112–13; Lilie et al., *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, #24419 (Leon).
  44. For Leo’s *Novels*, see Pierre Noailles and Alphonse Dain, *Les nouvelles de Léon VI le sage* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1944). The text of *Novel* 26 is at pp. 101–5, and *Novel* 98 is at pp. 321–27.
  45. Noailles and Dain, *Les nouvelles*, 103.

PART III

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Women and 'Male' Emotions



## Empresses in Byzantine Society: Justifiably Angry or Simply Angry?

*Andriani Georgiou*

No one can deny the commitment of Byzantine empresses to childbearing (*philandria*), philanthropy (*philanthropia*) and piety (*eusebeia*), nor their ability to wield great and real power (*basileia*).<sup>1</sup> However, the question of what emotions rather than virtues accompanied their retention of power has not been dealt with in any systematic scholarly investigation of the legal and actual influence of the concept of female imperial rule in Byzantium.<sup>2</sup> For example, anger was a common topic in the descriptions of emperors throughout the Byzantine period. Sozomenos's history recounts that Theodosios I, enraged by an act of disobedience by the city of Thessalonike, executed many of its citizens in 390.<sup>3</sup> Justinian I's anger against Pope Vigilius in 547 because he excommunicated the bishop of Constantinople was described in the narration of Theophanes the Confessor.<sup>4</sup> Basil I was depicted as an angry ruler even by sympathetic historians.<sup>5</sup> George Akropolites described Theodore Laskaris as particularly irascible.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the anger of an emperor was considered as especially devastating, which led to a series of advisory texts for rulers

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(*Mirrors for Princes*) in which special weight was placed on the control of anger. Synesios's advice to Arkadios pointed to moderation and wisdom and that the ruler is the one whom his subjects fear not, but for whom they fear.<sup>7</sup> In his exhortation to Justinian I, Agapetos lauded a ruler who could temper the majesty of his power with mildness, one who would not be puffed up and angry, because being enraged is evil.<sup>8</sup> In his letter to Boris I of Bulgaria, Photios wrote that a ruler must never punish anyone even justly while in anger, because anger is a blind passion and cannot tell good from bad.<sup>9</sup>

If anger is thought of as a simple human emotion that propels one to action, one must wonder whether Byzantine literary sources were equally concerned with the anger of empresses. A reflection of my interest in the study of the emotion of anger and the complexities in its interpretation, this chapter explores the ways in which the concept of the angry empress was constructed and perceived in Byzantine society, especially when compared to parallel considerations about male imperial aggression.<sup>10</sup> Within this society, gender was fundamental to the ways in which emotions worked and governed pervasive ideologies of masculinity and femininity. The cultural understanding held that men expressed their masculinity through control of their emotions—of themselves, and others—whereas women, by their nature, tended to be subject to emotion. Women were regarded as men's inferiors, as weak and deceitful. They were said to be licentious temptresses, possessing an uncontrolled and uncontrollable sexuality. They were considered evil when, acting with undue emotion, they disrupted the proper order of social relations.<sup>11</sup> John Chrysostom, in particular, taught that women were a second authority, because men and male behaviour were the norm and women's roles (virgin, wife, mother, widow) were conditioned by this state of affairs. Chrysostom further emphasised that if men set examples of gentleness, temperance and self-control, women will behave in the same way.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, in this sort of society, women, through the exercise of reason, prudence and masculine strength of self-control, could gain control over their emotionalism.<sup>13</sup>

Usually empresses fit into this category because their nobility served as a boundary, transgressing gender conventions and giving them a formalised role and an official access to political power that depended on their position. Their official title, their place in the ceremonies of state and their standing as consorts shifted their roles as women from domestic to public.<sup>14</sup> As I highlight in the following pages, what was

of importance in hierarchical terms was that empresses were expected to share the emperors' necessary characteristics for public life, such as emotional self-control. Becoming angry was also an important feature of their public presence. The case studies explored here show that by manipulating their sex, but not mutating it, empresses appropriated culturally accepted manly behavioural attributes, because in this way they could best carry out the duties of their office and see to it that the major social structures remained unchallenged. Yet, in subverting descriptions of empresses, according to which emotionalism responded to gender-biased tactics to destroy their reputations, the tension between the empresses' sex and their positions never disappeared. The interesting points that my investigation elucidates are the notions of anger being manly and therefore justified as righteous anger when expressed by the empress in her official role and anger as female feebleness and therefore defined as bad anger when expressed by the empress simply as a woman. Related to the understanding of these intricacies, I raise the following questions: What it meant in Byzantium to be an angry empress? What situations or events were considered liable to elicit anger in an empress? How was anger privately felt and publicly exhibited by an empress?

Interested in all extant references related to the individual and interpersonal processes that shaped female imperial anger, I take the reader from the *Deo coronata* Aelia Eudoxia (395–404) to the empress regnant Eirene (775–802). I also pay special attention to the example of the empress consort Theodora (527–548). For reasons that will be seen shortly, all three empresses received considerable attention in the literary scene of their times, with emphasis not merely on the deeds of their office but also on their personalities and the allegedly unfortunate nuances that their female nature created, which, according to contemporary public reception, disturbed the moral forms and social norms.

Daughter of a Frank of some prominence in the Western court, Eudoxia grew up in Constantinople, and soon after Arkadios (r. 395–408)—the eldest son of Theodosios I (r. 379–395)—assumed the throne in the East, she became his empress consort and an active *persona* at his court until her death some ten years later.<sup>15</sup> Gold, silver and bronze coins struck in her name by the Eastern mints presented her imperial status and authority in the most imposing manner to the collective gaze. The obverse and reverse of these coins, particularly the gold ones, not only bore images of her labelled and clothed as an Augusta (i.e. the *paludamentum* of purple and the imperial diadem) but also showed the



hand of God crowning her with a wreath, an iconographic novelty especially designed for Eudoxia's coinage.<sup>16</sup> Thus, Eudoxia was a *Deo coronata*, and was seen as such by the imperial ideology of her time.<sup>17</sup> The perception of her role was in fact not irrelevant to the Christian ideology of victory—much embraced throughout the years of the Theodosian dynasty—which fostered the idea that the emperor and empress should have their own specific duties and functions: the emperor's role was identified with the victory of Christ on Golgotha and hence with the military aspect of the empire for the defence of the faith, whereas the empress represented the victory of the Christian faith and hence the piety of the empire.<sup>18</sup>

Eudoxia's authoritative behaviour, then, was not viewed with surprise in the ecclesiastical realm, but was rather anticipated by her contemporaries. Fifth-century Constantinople was going to be accustomed, after all, to the public discourse of the succeeding generation of Theodosian imperial women (i.e. Pulcheria and Eudokia, daughter and daughter-in-law, respectively, of Eudoxia) through the patronage of churches, the translation of relics and their participation in church councils.<sup>19</sup> Eudoxia paved the way for female queenship (*basileia*) for them, validated by the previously established vision of Christian rule in which emperor and empress functioned as partners for the well-being of their empire.<sup>20</sup> This notion was not strange in the contemporary perception of the imperial couple and helps us to understand that Eudoxia—as well as Theodora and Eirene—wielded power as a woman and ruled as an empress, not as an emperor.<sup>21</sup> However, as we shall see, there was ambiguity and complexity regarding her public reception when the plots to overthrow the bishop of Constantinople became widely spread in the city.

Allegedly of humble origins, Theodora spent some time as an actress in Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople until 525, when she met and married Justinian I (r. 527–565). As soon as Justinian succeeded to the throne, Theodora was proclaimed Augusta and shared in her husband's political strategies and reforms.<sup>22</sup> The inclusion of her mosaic portrait in the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna, paralleling the portrait of the emperor on the opposite wall, serves as a visual declaration of her active role as empress consort at Justinian's court.<sup>23</sup> Executed a year before Theodora's death, the imperial panels highlight both Justinian and Theodora as the holy rulers of the empire: standing solemn and formal, with golden halos and imperial insignias, the imperial couple takes part in the sacrament of the Eucharist offering the bread and wine—the symbols

of God's manifestation in Christ—for consecration. God's elected representatives on earth, Justinian and Theodora perform acts in His service. In keeping with the tradition of female *basileia* in Byzantium, Theodora engaged in Christianity's growth. However, her support of Justinian's policies of tolerance towards the Monophysite (non-Chalcedonian) doctrine resulted in her being defamed, and this is the aspect of her public persona that I considered herein.

Born to a family of political significance in Athens, Eirene arrived in Constantinople in 769 to be married to Leo IV (r. 775–780), the eldest son of Constantine V (r. 741–775), and to be crowned empress.<sup>24</sup> Through her marriage, she came into a turbulent period for the unity of the empire. A few decades earlier (specifically in 726), the grandfather of Leo IV and founder of the Isaurian dynasty, Leo III (r. 717–741), had enacted legislative reforms that triggered the iconoclastic controversy and split the whole of Byzantium into two factions: one that engaged in or supported the destruction of religious images (i.e. iconoclasts) and the other that revered or venerated religious images (i.e. iconodules). Raised as an iconoclast, Eirene's husband maintained his grandfather's and father's religious policy, and actively persecuted iconodules.<sup>25</sup>

Leo IV's death in 780 resulted in the accession of his wife to the throne and the end of a long period of religious conflict. First, Eirene became regent for their nine-year-old son Constantine VI. This change of status was celebrated in 780 by a series of coins bearing her portrait.<sup>26</sup> The oddity on these coins was that Eirene's name gradually appeared on the front of the coin. Between 790 and 792, when Constantine attempted to assert his actual power to rule, Eirene was no longer accorded the sign of highest authority on the coins, the cross-bearing orb (*globus cruciger*). Roles were reversed again between 792 and 797, with coins showing Eirene, labelled Augusta, on the obverse side and relegating Constantine, labelled *Basileus*, to the reverse. He was still shown beardless, with the implication he was too young to rule. Finally, between 797 and 802, Eirene ruled alone. This change of status was commemorated by a series of coins that showed her on both sides. She was labelled *Basilissa*, the first time that this designation appeared on coins.<sup>27</sup> But in order to perform effectively in civil government, Eirene had to evince masculine virtues.

Considering how the anger—justifiable or not—of Eudoxia, Theodora and Eirene was constructed and perceived, I contend that their stories best demonstrate the two contradictory elements that

Byzantine society had to deal with when addressing empresses: their status as women and their position as rulers. The points raised here on female imperial anger relate to the debate about how the role of empress was understood and how ‘empress’ and ‘woman’ played off one another. No episodes of anger are known for other empresses from this period, which extended for approximately 400 years. All three empresses represent excellent case studies for understanding that, owing to the deep social structures of the Byzantine culture, attitudes towards gender and the emotion of anger did not change over time.

Attempting to recover the images of Eudoxia, Theodora and Eirene requires a great deal of caution as the hermeneutic context of the sources that refer to them must be considered first: Palladios (360s–430s), a high-ranking member of the clergy (i.e. a bishop) and a writer, whose actions proved him to be a devoted supporter of John Chrysostom; Sokrates (380s–430s), an ecclesiastical historian, who wrote during the reign of Eudoxia’s son, Theodosios II (r. 408–450); Sozomenos (early fifth century), an ecclesiastical historian, who dedicated his work to Theodosios II; Pseudo-Martyrios (early fifth century), a source thought to have been written by Kosmas, who was a contemporary and a supporter of John Chrysostom; Prokopios (c. 500–554), a secular historian, whose writings both praised and slandered Justinian I and Theodora; and Theophanes the Confessor (c. 760–817), the major historian of the period of Eirene’s rule were the principal sources for rendering my assessment of the three empresses much more insightful.<sup>28</sup> Crucial to our understanding of Eudoxia, Theodora and Eirene, is that all of our relevant information comes through the filter of these male authors. All three empresses were spoken for rather speaking for themselves, so their appearance in these accounts has to be considered in this light. In other words, these authors wrote narratives and constructed characters with particular aims. In the pages that follow, I show that they used emotions and gender rhetoric to make their points.

All my findings are evaluated against the theoretical picture of anger as it was shaped by the Church Fathers, theologians and theoreticians of the period under discussion: John Chrysostom (*Homily 2: On the Translation of Newly Acquired Relics in Praise of Saint Paul*; *Homily 20: On Ephesians 5:22–23*), Evagrius Pontikos (*Praktikos*), Maximos the Confessor (*Questions Addressed to Thalassius*) and John of Damascus (*An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*).

### THE *DEO CORONATA* AELIA EUDOXIA (395–404)

The sources are emphatic on Eudoxia's concern for religious affairs. Aligning herself with the defence of the Nicene Creed (and the Homoousian party), Eudoxia cooperated with the bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, to suppress Arian propaganda.<sup>29</sup> Acting in his support, she also engaged in public celebrations over the arrival of new martyrs' remains. On one such occasion, known to us through the sermon John Chrysostom delivered on the same day to eulogise it, Eudoxia presided over the nocturnal procession for the deposition of relics in the martyr chapel of Saint Thomas in a suburb called Drypia, nine miles from the city. People of Constantinople (lay and clerics, men and women, rich and poor, masters and servants, foreigners) of all ages participated, carrying candles and torches. Giving up the trappings of her imperial office, Eudoxia walked with her citizens in deep piety and humility. She acted alone as Arkadios's presence together with the horses and armed men that always accompanied him would have sent the festival into confusion and detracted from its spiritual mission.<sup>30</sup> John's description gives us the sense that the solo appearance of Eudoxia in such a significant public ceremony was totally in accord with her position as the empress, and not at all an act in defiance of established social conventions. This view seems to be supported by later evidence, such as the Trier ivory panel, in which the prominence of an empress rather than of an emperor in a procession of this type is a repeated subject.<sup>31</sup> Understood within this symbolic context, John's account reveals the ideological significance of the fact that the authority of a Byzantine empress, not by virtue of her person but rather by virtue of her office, was acknowledged. However, Eudoxia's authority, especially her right to make decisions in ecclesiastical matters, placed her public reception at the centre of intrigues and negotiations.

Specifically, she was seriously exposed when the plots to overthrow John Chrysostom became widely spread in Constantinople.<sup>32</sup> Sozomenos, Sokrates and Palladios informed their audiences that Eudoxia's attitude towards the events of John's deposition was the result of a well-orchestrated campaign by a powerful group that was of the opinion that John should not be bishop of Constantinople.<sup>33</sup> Many of the machinations that were carried out against him found attentive and believing listeners, and, according to Sozomenos, Eudoxia was among them.<sup>34</sup> Palladios further noted that bribes, flattery and

falsely incriminating memorials were employed in order to convince the empress that John had behaved towards her with disrespect. Palladios also reported that certain of John's homilies were even represented as jests at the expense of Eudoxia and of the imperial court.<sup>35</sup> The allegations, as the three authors allowed their audiences to understand, caused nothing less than the empress' instant angry reaction.

On one such occasion, John's discourse criticised the vices to which women were inclined:

John, when preaching in the church as usual, chanced to inveigh against the vices to which females are peculiarly prone. The people imagined that his strictures were enigmatically directed against the wife of the emperor. The enemies of the bishop did not fail to report his discourse in this sense to the empress; and she, conceiving herself to have been insulted, complained to the emperor.

Ἐκκλησιάζων Ἰωάννης κοινὸν κατὰ γυναικῶν διεξήλθε ψόγον· αἰνιγματωδῶς δὲ συγκεῖσθαι τοῦτον κατὰ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως γαμετῆς τὸ πλῆθος ἐδέχετο. Οἱ δὲ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου δυσμενεῖς, καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν λόγον ἐκλαμβάνοντες, τῇ βασιλίδι διεκόμισαν. Ἡ δὲ παρὰ τῷ ἀνδρὶ τὴν ὕβριν ἀπωδύρατο.<sup>36</sup>

On a second occasion, John disapproved the performance of public games and spectacles (i.e. dances and mimes) when they took place in close proximity to ecclesiastical sites. The erection of a silver statue of the empress near a church was the reason that the report of this second homily began as follows:

At this time a silver statue of the empress Eudoxia covered with a long robe was erected upon a column of porphyry supported by a lofty base. And this stood neither near nor far from the church named Sophia, but one-half the breadth of the street separated them. At this statue public games were accustomed to be performed; these John regarded as an insult offered to the church, and having regained his ordinary freedom and keenness of tongue, he employed his tongue against those who tolerated them. Now while it would have been proper to induce the authorities by a supplicatory petition to discontinue the games, he did not do this, but employing abusive language he ridiculed those who had enjoined such practices. The empress once more applied his expressions to herself as indicating marked contempt toward her own person: she therefore endeavoured to procure the convocation of another council of bishops against him.

When John became aware of this, he delivered in the church that celebrated oration commencing with these words: 'Again Herodias raves; again she is troubled; she dances again; and again desires to receive John's head on a charger.' This, of course, exasperated the empress still more.

Τῆς Αὐγοῦστης Εὐδοξίας ἀνδριάς ἀνέστη ἀργυροῦς ἐπὶ κίονος πορφυροῦ, χλανίδα ἐνδεδυμένος. Ἔστηκε δὲ οὗτος ἐπὶ βήματος ὑψηλοῦ, οὔτε ἐγγὺς πόρρω τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἧ ἐπόνυμον Σοφία ἄλλα διείργει ἄμφω μέση πλατείας ὁδός. Ἐπὶ τοῦτο συνήθως δημῶδεις ἤγοντο παιδιαί. Ἰωάννης δὲ ὕβριν τὰ γινόμενα τῆς ἐκκλησίας νομίζων, τῇ συνηθείᾳ τα παρρησίαν ἀνακτησάμενος πάλιν, τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γλώτταν κατὰ τῶν ποιούντων ἐξώπλιζε. Καὶ δέον τοὺς κρατοῦντας λόγῳ παρακλητικῶ πείθειν παῦσαι τῆς παιδιᾶς ὁ δὲ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἐποίει ἡ κατηφορικῇ δὲ τῇ γλώσσει χρησάμενος, ἔσκωπε τοὺς γενέσθαι ταῦτα καλεῖσαντας. Ἡ δὲ βασίλισσα πάλιν εἰς ἑαυτὴν εἶλκε τὰ γενόμενα καὶ ὕβριν ἑαυτῆς τοὺς ἐκείνου λόγους νομίζουσα, πάλιν παρασκευάζει σύνοδον ἐπισκόπων συνάγεσθαι κατ' αὐτοῦ. Αἰσθόμενος δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης τὴν περιβόητον ἐκείνην ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας διεξῆλθεν ὁμιλίαν, ἧς ἡ ἀρχὴ Πάλιν Ἡρωδίας μαίνεται, πάλιν ταρασσεται, πάλιν ὀρχεῖται, πάλιν ἐπὶ πίνακι τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου ζητεῖ λαβεῖν. Τοῦτο πλέον εἰς ὀργὴν ἐξῆψε τὴν βασιλίδα.<sup>37</sup>

Sozomenos, Sokrates and Palladios noted that John's enemies framed a charge as though these things were done to insult Eudoxia, and as planned the empress' irritation, further fuelled by the allegation that the bishop had compared her to Herodias and Jezebel, eventually led to John being exiled:

The treason consisted in offensive language against the empress, whom, as they alleged, he had called Jezebel. So this was the allegation of these wonderful people, longing to see John killed with the sword.

Ἦν δὲ ἡ καθοσίωσις ἢ εἰς τὴν βασίλισσαν λοιδορία, ὡς ἐκεῖνοι ἀνήνεγκαν, ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτὴν Ἰεζάβελ. Καὶ οἱ μὲν θαυμάσιοι, τὸν διὰ ξίφους θάνατον αὐτοῦ ποθήσαντες ἰδεῖν, οὕτως ἀνήνεγκαν.<sup>38</sup>

Data and protagonists are seen to be manipulated by the three authors in order to assure their audience that Eudoxia's anger was expressed on justifiable grounds. Her anger was not the result of any irrational impulse related to her femininity, but came about at the end of a process of moderation characterised by reasonableness. This is explicit in Sozomenos's contention that up until that point, Eudoxia was unwilling to oppose John, but had, on the contrary, respected him as a priest and the

initiator of her children.<sup>39</sup> According to Eudoxia's contemporary Synesios (c. 373–414), taming and domesticating the unreasoning parts of the soul and making them subservient to reason was a male imperial quality, but, in the words of Sozomenos, Sokrates and Palladios, the persona of Eudoxia was depicted as sharing it.<sup>40</sup> Employing such a masculine virtue for Eudoxia, the three authors allowed her office and character to be commemorated as good in the public's perception.

Nothing less than an alleged personal attack on Eudoxia could have occasioned such a sudden change in her mind about John, and, according to Sozomenos, Sokrates and Palladios, the people of Constantinople realised that she had been insulted. As the situation was understood to be problematic by a large group of citizens and not solely by the empress, the three authors detached natural female feebleness from Eudoxia's set of judgements. Her anger was generally approved. In the biblical figures of Herodias and Jezebel, Eudoxia and the people of Constantinople instantly recognised the story of two bad women possessed by an evil spirit, a spirit that normally possesses adulterous women insistent upon having their own way. They desire to be first and to exercise full control however they might achieve that. They will stoop to any level and partake of any sin to achieve their ends, which lie predominantly in the elimination of God's prophets.<sup>41</sup>

The negative comparisons to Herodias and Jezebel had been sharply experienced in the relations between imperial and ecclesiastical authority in the recent past, when Ambrose (c. 340–397), bishop of Milan (374–397), criticised Empress Justina (c. 340–388) for her influence on the religious policy of her son Emperor Valentinian II (r. 375–392).<sup>42</sup> It seems that a particular rhetoric of gender served all too well to allow Sozomenos, Sokrates and Palladios to stake out a domain of justice in which Eudoxia's anger was seen as righteous indignation. Within this context, the empress was portrayed as acting on the belief that her decisions were made with the welfare of the empire and the church in mind, with all the prudence and rationality that the dignity of her office demanded.<sup>43</sup>

The image of a justifiably angry Eudoxia, though, is seen to be easily reversed into a vicious one in stories biased against her because she was thought to transgress gender boundaries in her imperial conduct. In the work of Pseudo-Martyrios, Eudoxia's anger ceases to be legitimate or controllable, and her character is belittled based on gender-role excesses and abuses. The author's efforts to rehabilitate John's memory placed

Eudoxia at the centre of his condemnation, because, in his view, she had played a critical role in the bishop's expulsion. Favouring an invective solely against the empress and not the emperor, Pseudo-Martyrios presented the image of a wretched woman, whose actions were reminiscent of the biblical character of Jezebel and in whom the root of all evil had been concealed and the stain of Eve's disobedience had been gestated:

She, turning her back on him with angry shouts while he was still speaking, claimed that in his speech he equated her with Eve (as if she was any better than Eve even in any small way) and the emperor with Adam, and she began to say repeatedly: 'What more need do we have of witnesses against the man? He has cursed the emperor; let him depart into exile as quickly as possible'.

Ἡ δὲ σὺν βοῇ τε καὶ ὀργῇ καταλιποῦσα λαλοῦντα, Εὐάν ἔφασκεν αὐτὸν αὐτὴν πεποιηκέναι τῷ λόγῳ (ὥσπερ αὐτῆς τι βραχὺ γούν οὖσα ἀμείνων) καὶ Ἀδάμ τὸν βασιλέα, καὶ τὸ 'τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα'; ἔφασκεν, 'ἠὲλόγηκε βασιλέα, φευγέτω τὴν ταχίστην'.<sup>44</sup>

Eve's story seems to evoke cultural norms that were generally accepted in the period that the text was written, according to which a woman, in view of her responsibility for Original Sin, is subordinate to the man because when she exercised her authority she did it badly.<sup>45</sup> Eudoxia being compared to Eve, then, was read as Pseudo-Martyrios's way of declaring that she was incapable of ruling because she was a woman. Her inferiority was further manifested by the inability of her female nature to control her emotions and to overcome irrational impulses:

He [the Devil] implanted in the woman who wielded power forgetfulness of the earlier blow and introduced in its stead a profound hatred, which he contrived with no great toil, spreading many lies through many mouths.

Τῷ τε κρατοῦντι γυναίῳ λήθην μὲν ἐμποιεῖ τῆς πληγῆς τῆς προτέρας, ἔχθραν δὲ ἀντεισάγει βαθεῖαν, ἦν οὐ πολλῶ καμάτῳ πολλὰ διὰ πολλῶν στομάτων ψευδόμενος ὕφαινεν.<sup>46</sup>

As will be seen below, the femininity of a Byzantine empress and its connection to emotion, naturally not to her credit, becomes predominant in descriptions of the empress consort Theodora.



## THE EMPRESS CONSORT THEODORA (527–548)

Theodora's reconstructed image as a bad woman in contemporary narratives elaborates on the tension between sex and position with which an empress' experience was marked in Byzantium. Having an active role at her husband's court as his empress consort, Theodora supported Justinian's policies of tolerance towards the Monophysite (non-Chalcedonian) doctrine.<sup>47</sup> She was an intimate of the great Severos of Antioch; she sheltered Monophysite monks and clergy in large numbers in the palace in Constantinople for years on end; she sent Monophysite missionaries to Nubia; and she supported James Bar'adai, who effectively created the Monophysite institutional structure in the Eastern provinces.<sup>48</sup> Being significantly judgemental against them, their contemporary author Prokopios directed his audience to believe that Justinian's and Theodora's religious position was part of a successfully coordinated plot: 'First of all they set the Christians at variance with one another, and by pretending to go opposite ways from each other in the matters under dispute, they succeeded in rending them all asunder' ('πρῶτα μὲν οὖν τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς διαναστήσαντες καὶ τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔν γε τοῖς ἀντιλεγόμενοις σκηπτομένῳ ἀλλήλοισιν ἰέναι διεσπᾶσαντο οὕτως ἅπαντας').<sup>49</sup> In Justinian, Prokopios saw 'an arch-destroyer of well-established institutions' ('μέγιστος δὴ οὗτος ἦν διαφθορεὺς τῶν εὖ καθεστώτων'), who, with Theodora's help, 'ruined the people even more than before, and not in Constantinople alone, but throughout the whole empire' ('πολλῶ ἔτι μᾶλλον τὸν δῆμον διέφθειρεν οὐκ ἐνταῦθα μόνον, ἀλλ' ἀνὰ πᾶσαν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχήν').<sup>50</sup> In Prokopios's account, Justinian and Theodora acted with a pretence of piety because, as the author explained to his audience, in their 'eagerness to gather all men into one belief as to Christ', they 'kept destroying the rest of mankind in senseless fashion' ('ἐς μίαν γὰρ ἀμφὶ τῷ Χριστῷ δόξαν συναγαγεῖν ἅπαντας ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχων λόγῳ οὐδενὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους διέφθειρε').<sup>51</sup>

Whatever Justinian's and Theodora's actions in this matter actually were, Prokopios clearly damaged their imperial status. Promoting falsehoods and writing in a highly offensive manner, Prokopios reintroduced his protagonists as the perfect anti-emperor and anti-empress, who acted as complicit partners.<sup>52</sup> Inverting normative behaviour, he portrayed them as the betrayal of all masculine (courage, justice, temperance, wisdom, self-control, pursuit of the common good, chastity, piety

and philanthropy) and feminine (gentle, modest, dedicated to family and home, pious, philanthropic, humble, chaste) virtues. Deploying emotions, he condemned their authority to rule. Prone to anger, as Prokopios wrote, Justinian and Theodora showed their teeth, never forgiving a perceived slight. But Prokopios's description of the way the anger of the two was expressed publicly differed considerably. Aware of the qualities befitting a Byzantine emperor, the author portrayed Justinian as a ruler who, despite his true emotions:

Showed himself approachable and kindly to those who came into contact with him; and no man whatever had the experience of being excluded from access to him, but on the contrary he was never angry even with those who failed to observe decorum as to standing or speaking in his presence. However, he did not, on that account, blush before any of those destined to be ruined by him. Indeed he never allowed himself to show anger, either, or exasperation, and thus to reveal his feelings to those who had given offence, but with gentle mien and with lowered brows and in a restrained voice he would give orders for the death of thousands of innocent men, for the dismantling of cities, and for the confiscation of all monies to the Treasury.

Εὐπρόσιτον δὲ παρεῖχεν αὐτὸν καὶ πρᾶον τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν, οὐδενὶ τε τῶν πάντων ἀποκεκλεισθαι τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν εἰσόδου συνέβαινεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς οὐκ ἐν κόσμῳ παρ' αὐτῷ ἐστῶσιν ἢ φθεγγομένοις οὐδεπώποτε χαλεπῶς ἔσχευ. Οὐ μέντοι διὰ ταῦτα ἠρυσθρία τινὰ τῶν πρὸς αὐτοῦ ἀπολουμένων. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ ὀργῆς πώποτε ἢ ἀκροχολίας τι ὑποφαίνων ἐς τοὺς προσκερουκότας ἐνδηλος γέγονεν, ἀλλὰ πρᾶος μὲν τῷ προσώπῳ, καθειμέναις δὲ ταῖς ὀφρῦσιν, ὑφειμένη δὲ τῇ φωνῇ ἐκέλευε μυριάδας μὲν διαφθεῖραι μηδὲν ἡδικηκότων ἀνθρώπων, πόλεις δὲ καθελεῖν, χρήματα τε ἀνάγραπτα ἐς τὸ δημόσιον πάντα ποιεῖσθαι.<sup>53</sup>

Clearly, in Prokopios's account, Justinian never showed his anger publicly, because as a man he was able to gain control over emotionalism. As the author described him, he seemed to be too good-natured.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Theodora, however, he contended that anger clouded rational thought and generated a vicious circle of fury and rage. Theodora, he wrote, was harsh and exceedingly difficult.<sup>55</sup> Prokopios described an empress who 'never did anything at any time as the result of persuasion or compulsion by another person, but she herself, applying a stubborn will, carried out her decisions with all her might, no one daring to intercede for the victim who had given offence' ('ἄλλω μὲν γὰρ ἀναπεισθεῖσα

ἢ ἀναγκασθεῖσα εἰργάζετο οὐδὲν πάποτε, αὐτὴ δὲ τὰ δόξαντα ἐπετέλει αὐθαδιαζομένη δυνάμει τῆ πάση, οὐδενὸς ἐξαιτεῖσθαι τὸν παραπεπτωκότα τολμῶντος’).<sup>56</sup> Prokopios used the example of irrational anger to stress that Theodora was weak as a woman and implicitly to claim her inability to act as an empress. Disengaged from any quality appropriate to the dignity of her office and her sex, Theodora was represented to respect neither established laws nor the function of the judges, whom she forced ‘to contend with each other as to which of them by the inhumanity shewn in the judgement should be able better than the others to satisfy her purpose’ (‘ὅστις ἂν αὐτῶν μᾶλλον τῶν ἄλλων ἀρέσκειν τῆ ἐς τὴν γνῶσιν ἀπανθρωπία τῆς βασιλίδος τὸ βούλημα ἱκανὸς γένοιτο’).<sup>57</sup> Towards this end, Prokopios presented the image of an empress who fabricated accusations—not always for clear reasons, personal or civic—and to whom no place remained undefiled or inviolate. In one such alleged incident ‘she conceived an anger against a certain Vasianos’ (‘αὐτῇ διαλοιδορησάμενον δι’ ὀργῆς ἔσχε’), for having covered her with abuse.<sup>58</sup> Vasianos took refuge in one of Constantinople’s churches, but:

She immediately set upon him the official in charge of the people, commanding him to make no point of his abuse of her, but laying against him the charge of sodomy. And the official removed the man from the sanctuary and inflicted a certain intolerable punishment upon him. And the populace, upon seeing a free-born man involved in such dire misfortunes, a man who had long been living in luxury, were all straightaway filled with anguish at the calamity and in lamentation raised their cries to the heavens, seeking to intercede for the youth. She, however, only punished him even more, and cutting off his private parts destroyed him without a trial and confiscated his property to the Treasury. Thus whenever this hussy became excited, no sanctuary proved secure nor did any legal prohibition hold, nor could the supplication of a whole city, as it was clearly shewn, avail to rescue the offender, nor could anything else whatever stand in her way.

ἢ δὲ οἱ ἐπέστησεν αὐτίκα τὴν τῷ δήμῳ ἐφεστῶσαν ἀρχήν, οὐδὲν μὲν τῆς λοιδορίας ἐπικαλεῖν ἐπαγγείλασα, ὅτι δὲ παιδραστοίη ἐπενεγκούσα. Καὶ ἢ μὲν ἀρχὴ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀναστήσασα ἠκίζετο ἀνυποίστω τινὶ κολάσει, ὃ δὲ δῆμος ἅπας ἐπεὶ ἐν ταιαύταις συμφοραῖς εἶδε σῶμα ἐλευθέριον τε καὶ ἀνεμῆνη ἄνωθεν διαίτη ἐντραφέν, ἀπήλγησάν τε τὸ πάθος εὐθὺς καὶ ξὺν οἰμωγῇ ἀνέκραγον οὐράνιον ὅσον ἐξαιτούμενοι τὸν νεανίαν. Ἡ δὲ αὐτὸν ἔτι μᾶλλον κολάσασα καὶ τὸ αἰδοῖον ἀποτεμομένη διέφθειρεν ἀνεξελέγκτως, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐς τὸ δημόσιον ἀνεγράψατο.

Οὕτως ἦν ἰκὰ ὀργῶν τὸ γύναιον τοῦτο, οὔτε ἱερὸν ὄχυρον ἐγεγόνει οὔτε νόμον τοῦ ἀπαγόρευσις οὔτε πόλεως ἀντιβόλησις ἐξελέσθαι τὸν παραπεπτωκότα ἰκανὴ ἐφαίνετο οὔσα, οὔτε ἄλλο αὐτῇ ἀπῆντα τῶν πάντων οὐδέν.<sup>59</sup>

Prokopios's description of Theodora showed an empress whose cruelty in accomplishing her will fuelled a bad anger which fostered spoiled and abused justice: 'This woman claimed the right to administer everything in the state by her own arbitrary judgement' ('αὕτη ἅπαντα πρυτανεύειν αὐτογνώμονουσα τὰ ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ ἡξίου').<sup>60</sup> Anger, as influential Byzantine theologians taught, could be a good emotion, useful for moving a person to right wrongs and correct injustice. This motivation or the purpose of doing something was the safest indicator of whether one's anger was directed by a reasoned impulse or not.<sup>61</sup> In fact, in the case of rulers, Prokopios's contemporary and tutor of Justinian, Agapetos, claimed the complete absence of anger does not earn respect, especially in reaching judgement, so he must be exceedingly slow to wrath and moderately angry.<sup>62</sup> Good anger, then, was proof of good rulership. Theodora, however, as described by Prokopios, was unable to display that moderation:

And being angry with a certain Diogenes, as being a Green, a man who was witty and liked by all, even by the emperor himself, she nevertheless was determined to bring against him the slanderous charge of male intercourse. Consequently she persuaded two of his own domestics to act as both accusers and witnesses and set them upon their owner. And when he was first examined, not secretly and with the great privacy which is usually observed, but in a public trial, with many judges appointed who were men of note, all on account of the reputation of Diogenes, since it did not seem to the judges, as they sought to get at the exact truth, that the statements of the domestics were of sufficient weight to justify a decision, particularly as they were young boys, she confined Theodore, one of the connections of Diogenes, in the usual cells. There she attacked the man with much cajolery and also with abuse. But since she met with no success, she caused the attendants to wind a leathern strap on the man's head, about his ears, and then ordered them to twist and so to tighten the strap. And Theodore believed that his eyes had jumped out of his head, leaving their proper seats, yet he was unwilling to fabricate any untruth. So finally the judges acquitted Diogenes on the ground that the charge was unsupported by evidence, and the whole city in consequence celebrated a public holiday.

Καὶ Διογένην δε τινα οἶα Πράσινον ὄντα δι' ὀργῆς ἔχουσα, ἄνδρα ἀστεῖον καὶ ποθεινὸν ἅπασί τε καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ βασιλεῖ, οὐδέν τι ἦσσαν γάμων ἀνδρείων συκοφαντεῖν ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχε. Δύο γοῦν ἀναπέισασα τῶν αὐτοῦ οἰκετῶν κατηγοροὺς τε καὶ μάρτυρας τῷ κεκτημένῳ ἐπέστησε. Τοῦ δὲ οὐ κρύβδην ἐξεταζομένου καὶ λαθραιότατα, ἥπερ εἰώθει, ἀλλ' ἐν δημοσίῳ, δικαστῶν ἡρημένων πολλῶν τε καὶ οὐκ ἀδόξων, διὰ τὴν Διογένους δόξαν, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἐδόκουν ἀκριβολογουμένοις τοῖς δικασταῖς οἱ τῶν οἰκετῶν λόγοι ἀξιόχρεοι εἰς τὴν κρίσιν εἶναι, ἄλλως τε καὶ παιδαρίων ὄντων, Θεόδωρον τῶν Διογένει ἀναγκαίων τινὰ ἐν τοῖς εἰωθόσις οἰκιδίσις καθεῖρξεν. Ἐνταῦθα πολλὰς μὲν θωπείαις πολλοῖς δὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπον αἰκισμοῖς περιῆλθεν. Ἐπεὶ τέ οἱ οὐδὲν προύχῳρει, νευρὰν βοεῖαν εἰς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀμφὶ τὰ ὄτα περιελίξαντας τὴν νευρὰν στρέφειν τε καὶ σφίγγειν ἐκέλευε. Καὶ τοὺς μὲν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὺς Θεόδωρος ἐκπεπηδηκέναι τὴν οἰκείαν λιπόντας χῶραν ὑπώπτευσεν, οὐδὲν μέντοι τῶν οὐ γενοτόων ἀναπλάσσειν ἔγνω. Διὸ δὴ οἱ μὲν δικασταὶ ἅτε ἀμαρτυρήτου δίκης Διογένους ἀπέγνωσαν, ἡ δὲ πόλις ἐορτὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πανδημεῖ ἤγεν.<sup>63</sup>

Here Prokopios portrayed an empress whose inability to share in the characteristics required for an emperor's functioning in public life, such as abstaining from wickedness and striving to hold fast to justice, exposed her as a not loveable ruler whose power was of ill repute.<sup>64</sup> Theodora's anger was not approved. On the contrary, the people of the city were depicted celebrating her failure to enforce her bad judgement. Prokopios further claimed to justify his slander against the empress by describing Theodora's unanimous rejection by the people of Constantinople in his narration.

In Theodora, Prokopios saw a kind of avenging demon because her acts and destructive powers could not possibly be due to human strength but rather must come from a supernatural source.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, anger was the dominant characteristic of the demonic, according to Byzantine theology, because it made a person unstable and unable to practise self-control and self-discipline.<sup>66</sup> In Prokopios's view, Theodora's inability to control her anger seemed to signal the failure of the authority that she and her husband represented. He used anger to debase Theodora as unworthy, not just as a female, but, above all, as an empress—in other words, as a woman, Theodora's anger not only prevented her from achieving harmony in her soul, but also kept her from promoting her actions as empress into a form of judgement that corrects faults and maintains justice. As will be seen below, this connection of imperial rule with bad anger is further unfolded in descriptions related to the

Iconoclastic period (726–843), when the empress regnant Eirene was drafted into active participation and political leadership.

### THE EMPRESS REGNANT EIRENE (775–802)

Eirene's case suggests that the integrity and justification of the Byzantine Empire was not vested strictly in a male ruler and that alterations in power dynamics were handled with flexibility. Byzantines expected Eirene to act with masculine authority. Ruling in her own right, she engaged with the ecclesiastical realm and had to deal with the way Christian ideology envisioned the role of the empress. At the same time, she had to manage all aspects of government (legislation, negotiations with foreign forces, military campaigns) in the same way that a male ruler was expected to act. As she did not want anyone to misunderstand the nature and authenticity of her sole rule (i.e. that she was no mere consort, but the real ruler), Eirene used the masculine form *Basileus* on her legal documents.<sup>67</sup> The emperor was the source of law, so Eirene's power as an institution, regardless of the fact that she was a woman, was not open to question.<sup>68</sup>

As a ruler, Eirene encountered incidents that angered her. Specifically, Theophanes the Confessor's narration gave his contemporaries to understand that Eirene became angry particularly when she had to cope with attempts to subvert her rule. Obviously, Theophanes accepted and conveyed the conclusion that her anger was conceived for clear and justifiable, not personal, reasons. On one such occasion, during the second year of her reign (i.e. 798), there was a serious rivalry among three court eunuchs (Aetios, Niketas and Staurakios). According to Theophanes, this enmity was intensified when the empress fell ill near to the point of death and Aetios and Niketas were set in opposition to Staurakios:

Even suggesting to the empress that he [Staurakios] was aiming at the throne. In her anger she belaboured him severely in the palace of Hieria saying that he was an instigator of unrest and sedition and was preparing his own hasty destruction.

πειθόντες καὶ τὴν βασιλίσσαν, ὅτι τοῦ κράτους ἐφίεται· καὶ θυμωθεῖσα δεινῶς αὐτῷ ἐπηνέχθη ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ τῶν Ἱερείου εἰποῦσα μούλτων καὶ στάσεων φροντιστὴν αὐτὸν εἶναι καὶ ἑαυτῷ προξενούντα ταχίστην ἀπόλειαν.<sup>69</sup>

A Byzantine male ruler was expected to confront threats of dynastical cohesion in this way. Similar incidents were described by Theophanes for the reigns of Eirene's predecessors Leo III, Leo IV, her son Constantine VI and her successor Nikephoros I (r. 802–811).<sup>70</sup> In such exposed plots, all the rulers had the conspirators scourged, tonsured and banished. Acting in a culturally accepted male imperial way, Eirene's reaction against any person who threatened her power was publicly understood to be identified and associated with her status as a ruler. Within this context, the anger she expressed and the consequent harsh punishments she imposed were accepted as being the result of her mandate to rule the empire with good judgement. In Theophanes's account, Eirene's profile fitted well with what advisory texts for rulers and theological treatises prescribed: she was the master of her anger but was not overcome by sympathy; she strove for justice in her judgements.<sup>71</sup>

In theological terms, the contemporary belief was that God made men and women sinless by nature and endowed them with free will. However, sinless did not mean that they would not sin but that sin was the result of the free volition that they enjoyed. In other words, men and women had the power to go forward on the path of goodness or to turn from good and take to wickedness.<sup>72</sup> Successful in this context, Eirene's transgressive actions seem to have created a new dynamic in which the tight linkage between maleness and authority could be embodied in a woman. Moreover, if Eirene was to be seen to be at the virtuous end of the scale, the empress' contemporaries, including Theophanes, placed her iconoclast predecessors Leo III and Constantine V at the other end, the one governed by irrational impulses and violence. Met with an unfavourable reception, the two emperors were portrayed too ready to subvert the empire's well-being as their decisions and actions were accompanied by illogical and incorrect anger. Specifically, in one such example, Theophanes related that during the 13th year of Leo III's reign (i.e. 730):

[The emperor] in his raging fury against the correct faith summoned the blessed Germanos and began to entice him with flattering words. The blessed bishop said to him, 'We have heard it said that there will be a destruction of the holy and venerable icons, but not in your reign'. When the other compelled him to declare in whose reign that would be, he said, 'That of Konon'. Then Leo said, 'Truly, my baptismal name is

Konon'. The patriarch replied, 'May not this evil be accomplished in your reign, O lord! For he who commits this deed is the precursor of the Antichrist and the subverter of the divine Incarnation'. Waxing irritated at this, the tyrant assailed the blessed man as Herod had once done to the Forerunner. [...] So then, this holy and admirable man Germanos was prominent in defending pious doctrine in Byzantium and fought the wild beast Leo (fitly so named) and the latter's supporters. [...] In his anger the tyrant intensified the assault on the holy icons. Many clerics, monks, and pious laymen faced danger on behalf of the true faith and won the crown of martyrdom.

ἀπομανεῖς Λέων, ὁ παράνομος βασιλεύς, κατὰ τῆς ὀρθῆς πίστεως καὶ ἐνέγκας τὸν μακάριον Γερμανὸν ἤρξατο αὐτὸν θωπευτικοῖς λόγοις δελεάζειν. Ὁ δὲ μακάριος ἀρχιερεὺς ἔφη πρὸς αὐτόν· 'τὴν μὲν καθαίρεσιν τῶν ἁγίων καὶ σεπτῶν εἰκόνων ἀκούομεν ἔσεσθαι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τῆς σῆς βασιλείας.' Τούτου δὲ ἐπαναγκάσαντος εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ τίνος βασιλείας; ἔφη· 'ἐπὶ Κόνωνος.' Ὁ δὲ ἔφη· 'τὸ βαπτιστικὸν μου ὄνομα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ Κόνων ἐστίν.' Ὁ δὲ πατριάρχης ἔφη· 'μὴ γένοιτο, δέσποτα, διὰ τῆς σῆς βασιλείας τὸ κακὸν τοῦτο τελεσθῆναι. Ἀντιχρίστου γὰρ ἐστὶ πρόδρομος ὁ τοῦτο πληρῶν καὶ τῆς ἐνσάρκου θείας οἰκονομίας ἀνατροπέυς.' Ἐπὶ τούτοις χαλεπήνας ὁ τύραννος ἐνεῖχε τῷ μακαρίῳ, ὡς Ἡρώδης ποτὲ τῷ προδρόμῳ [...] Καὶ ἐν μὲν τῷ Βυζαντίῳ πρόμαχος τῶν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας δογμάτων ὁ ἱερός οὗτος καὶ θεσπέσιος ἤκμαζε Γερμανὸς θηριομαχῶν πρὸς τὸν φερώνυμον Λέοντα καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ συνασπιστάς [...]. Ἐκμανεῖς οὖν ὁ τύραννος ἐπέτεινε τὸν κατὰ τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων διωγμόν, πολλοὶ τε κληρικοὶ καὶ μονασταὶ καὶ εὐλαβεῖς λαϊκοὶ ὑπερεκινδύνευσαν τοῦ ὀρθοῦ τῆς πίστεως λόγου τὸν μαρτυρικὸν ἀναδησάμενοι στέφανον.<sup>73</sup>

As he had parted company from God and engaged in myriad soul-destroying pursuits, Leo III's anger—and that of Constantine V likewise—was seen by Theophanes as wild and animal-like, generating a malignant cycle of unjust punishments and cruel tortures on those who were averse to embracing their policies on the cult of icons.<sup>74</sup> Elaborating, then, on the bad anger of Eirene's contemporary male rulers, but restricting his narration of the empress' anger to challenges to her authority to rule, Theophanes seems to have written on behalf of a society totally ready to recognise the functions of anger and its effects in changing the way individuals were to be perceived. Theophanes, then, used anger to proclaim Eirene's superiority.



## CONCLUSIONS

Recognising the good and bad dynamic of anger as integral to their narratives, as well as a means of conveying the inherent import of their descriptions, all the male authors considered here allow us to access each case of female imperial anger in its own particular context. Moreover, they help us to understand the cultural rules that engendered the good and bad personas of Eudoxia, Theodora and Eirene. Taken together, the cases provide good examples of the place of female imperial anger in an array of subjects, ideas, roles and gestures in Byzantine society. On the one hand, anger was understood as directed at repairing damages or punishing wrongdoers; it was reasonable, just, useful, controlled. This type of anger was a male imperial quality that the Byzantine empress had to share if she was to prove her authority to rule. This equation between female and male imperial anger projects a socially constructed, accepted and transmitted norm: in a patriarchal society, such as Byzantium, anger was not reserved for emperors' use only; anger was judgemental and empresses had a share in it, demonstrating that Byzantines were willing to have women pass judgement on them. On the other hand, anger was understood as out of control; it was unreasonable, sinful. This type of anger was a weakness that the Byzantine empress was inclined to owing to the inability of her female nature to maintain self-control. This gender-based identification seems to have been an unquestioned premise in the conceptual universe of a cross-section of Byzantines, including ecclesiastics and laymen, as were most of the authors discussed herein. This twofold definition and use of anger was, clearly, an important feature of the Byzantine empresses' public presence and reception, addressing both their position as rulers and their status as women. The way anger was displayed, concealed, restrained, or exaggerated in Eudoxia, Theodora and Eirene brings us a step closer to the value system of Byzantine society, in which emotions—mediated by male authorities—seem to have functioned as carriers of contexts of communication.<sup>75</sup>

## NOTES

1. I wish to thank Leslie Brubaker (University of Birmingham), Liz James (University of Sussex), Stavroula Constantinou (University of Cyprus), and Mati Meyer (The Open University of Israel) for their invaluable feedback in the making of this article. Obviously any errors, mistakes,

- or inaccuracies in this work are solely my responsibility. On the nature of female imperial power, see Liz James, *Empresses and Power in Early Byzantium* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2001).
2. Scholarly accounts of Byzantine empresses include Lynda Garland, *Byzantine Empresses: Women and Power in Byzantium, A.D. 527–1204* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Judith Herrin, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Barbara Hill, *Imperial Women in Byzantium, 1025–1204: Power, Patronage and Ideology* (London: Longman, 1999).
  3. Sozomenos, *Church History*; Chester David Hartranft (trans.), ‘The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen’, in *NPNF* ed. Henry Wace and Philip Schaff, vol. 2 (Oxford and New York: Christian Literature Company, 1891), 883: VII.15; *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, Joseph Bidez and Günther Christian Hansen (eds.), *GCS* 50 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1960), 319: VII.15.
  4. Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*; Cyril Mango and Roger Scott (trans.), *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, A.D. 284–813* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 288; Carl De Boor (ed.), *Theophanes Chronographia* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1963), 225.13–28.
  5. Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*; Immanuel Bekker (ed.), *Theophanes Continuatus, CSHB* (Bonn: Weber, 1838).
  6. George Akropolites, *History*; Ruth Macrides (ed.), *George Akropolites, The History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
  7. Synesios, *On Imperial Rule*; Antonio Garzya, Nicola Terzaghi, and Charles Lacombrade (eds.), *Opere di Sinesio di Cirene: epistole, operette, inni, (Classici greci)* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1989), 406, 424.
  8. Agapetos, *Advice to the Emperor Justinian*; Peter N. Bell (trans.), *Three Political Voices from the Age of Justinian* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 107.21, 110.31, 116.52; Rudolf Riedinger (ed.), *Agapetos Diakonos: der Fürstenspiegel für Kaiser Iustinianos* (Athens: Etaireia Philōn tou Laou, 1995), 38.21, 46.31, 62.52.
  9. Photios, *Letter to Khan Boris of Bulgaria*; Despina Stratoudaki (trans.), *The Patriarch and the Prince: The Letter of Patriarch Photios of Constantinople to Khan Boris of Bulgaria* (Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1982), 73.84–87; Basileios Laourdas and Leendert Gerrit Westerink (eds.), *Photii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani Epistulae et Amphilochia* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1984), vol. 1, 33.1019–34.1034.
  10. On anger in Byzantine society, see Martin Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Chichester and Malden, MA: Wiley, 2010), 123–34.

11. On the gendered aspects of emotions in general, see Liz James, 'Men, Women, Eunuchs: Gender, Sex and Power', in *The Social History of Byzantium*, ed. John F. Haldon (Malden: Blackwell, 2009), 31–50; Leonora Neville, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 15–29.
12. John Chrysostom, *Homily 20: On Ephesians* 5: 22–23; Catharine P. Roth and David Anderson (trans.), *On Marriage and Family Life* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986), 53, 60: 'The wife is a second authority. She should not demand equality, for she is subject to the head; neither should the husband belittle her subjection, for she is the body. If the head despises the body, it will itself die. Rather, let the husband counterbalance her obedience with his love. Let the hands, the feet, and all the rest of the body's parts be dedicated to the service of the head; but let the head provide for the body, for the head is responsible for all the members [...]. Paul places the head in authority and the body in obedience for the sake of peace. Where there is equal authority, there never is peace. A household cannot be a democracy, ruled by everyone, but the authority must necessarily rest in one person. [...] Beginning on their wedding night, let him be an example of gentleness, temperance, and self-control; and she will be likewise' (PG 62, 140–41, 145); 'Ἀρχὴ Δευτέρα ἐστὶν ἡ γυνή. Μῆτε οὖν αὕτη τὴν ἰσοτιμίαν ἀπαιτεῖτω· ὑπὸ γὰρ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐστὶ· μῆτε ἐκεῖνος ὡς ὑποτεταγμένης καταφρονεῖτω· σῶμα γάρ ἐστι, κἂν καταφρονῆ τοῦ σώματος ἡ κεφαλὴ, καὶ αὕτῃ προσαπολείται· ἄλλ' ἀντίβροπον τῆς ὑπακοῆς εἰσαγέτω τὴν ἀγάπην. Ὡσπερ ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα· τὸ μὲν αὐτῇ πρὸς διακονίαν παρέχον τὰς χεῖρας, τοὺς πόδας, τὰ λοιπὰ πάντα μέλη [...]. Διὰ τοῦτο τὴν μὲν ὑπέταξε, τὸν δὲ ἐπέθηκεν, ἵνα εἰρήνη ᾗ. Ἐνθα γὰρ ἰσοτιμία, εἰρήνη οὐκ ἂν ποτε γένοιτο, οὐδὲ δημοκρατουμένης οἰκίας, οὐδὲ πάντων ἀρχόντων, ἀλλὰ ἀνάγκη μίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀρχήν [...]. Καθάπερ ἄγαλμα δεχόμενος, οὕτως ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας ἐκείνης, ἧς ἂν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν θάλαμον δέχηται, διδασκέτω σωφροσύνην, ἐπιείκειαν, ὅπως βιώσῃται σεμνῶς, ἐκ προομιῶν εὐθέως καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν προθύρων καταβάλλων τῶν χρημάτων τὸν ἔρωτα.'
13. Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 17–18.
14. James, 'Men, Women, Eunuchs', 39–45; Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 17–20; see below, note 46.
15. On Eudoxia's early life and her role at court, see Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1982), 48–69.
16. Philip Grierson and Melinda Mays, *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*:

- From Arcadius and Honorius to the Accession of Anastasius* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 12–13, 76–82, 85–86, and 152–56.
17. For more on the sacral *basileia* of Eudoxia, see Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 65–67.
  18. Andriani Georgiou, ‘Helena: The Subversive Persona of an Ideal Christian Empress in Early Byzantium’, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 21.4 (2013): 609–11.
  19. Leslie Brubaker, ‘Memories of Helena: Patterns in Imperial Female Matronage in the 4th and 5th Centuries’, in *Women, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 52–75.
  20. Diliana Angelova, ‘The Ivories of Ariadne and Ideas About Female Imperial Authority in Rome and Early Byzantium’, *Gesta* 43.1 (2004): 1–15, esp. 1–6.
  21. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2: On the Translation of Newly Acquired Relics* (PG 63, 467–72).
  22. On Theodora’s early life and her role in affairs of state, see Paolo Cesaretti, *Theodora: Empress of Byzantium* (New York: Vendome Press, 2004); James Allan Evans, *The Empress Theodora: Partner of Justinian* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); Clive Foss, ‘The Empress Theodora’, *Byzantion* 72 (2002): 141–76; Garland, *Byzantine Empresses*, 11–39; Hans-George Beck, *Kaiserin Theodora und Prokop: Der Historiker und sein Opfer* (Munich: Piper, 1986).
  23. For an extensive bibliography on the mosaics, see Charles Barber, ‘The Imperial Panels at San Vitale: A Reconsideration’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 14 (1990): 19–42.
  24. For Eirene, see Herrin, *Women in Purple*, 51–129; Garland, *Byzantine Empresses*, 73–94.
  25. On the institutionalisation of iconoclasm by Leo III, Constantine V, and Leo IV, see Leslie Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
  26. The previous empress coins appeared a century and a half earlier, in 629, when the Herakleios dynasty was in power.
  27. For the coins, see Leslie Brubaker and Helena Tobler, ‘The Gender of Money: Byzantine Empresses on Coins (324–802)’, *Gender and History* 12.3 (2000): 587–90; Cécile Morisson, ‘L’impératrice Irène (780–802)’, *Bulletin (Le Club Français de la Médaille)* 84 (1984): 118–20.
  28. Elena Magheri Cataluccio, *Il Lausaikon di Palladio tra semiotica e storica* (Rome: Herder, 1984); Hartmut Leppin, ‘The Church Historians, I: Socrates, Sozomenus, and Theodoretus’, in *Greek and Roman*

- Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 219–54; Theresa Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople: Historian of Church and State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); Jennifer Barry, ‘Diagnosing Heresy: Ps.-Martyrius’s Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom’, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24.3 (2016): 395–418; Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985); Cyril Mango, ‘Who Wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?’, *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoškog Instituta* 18 (1978): 9–18.
29. Eudoxia covered the cost of whatever was required for the Homoousian processions that John commanded, whereas Arkadios declared Arianism’s followers as public enemies as John had urged. So, the imperial couple was acting together for the common good. See Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), ‘The Ecclesiastical History’, 898–99: VIII.4, 901: VIII.5, 905: VIII.8; Bidez and Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 354: VIII.4, 357: VIII.5, 360: VIII.8; Sokrates, *Church History*; Andrew C. Zenos (trans.), ‘The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates Scholasticus’, in *NPNF*, ed. Henry Wace and Philip Schaff, vol. 2 (Oxford and New York: Christian Literature Company, 1891), 354–55: VI.5, 356–58: VI.6, 362: VI.8; Günther Christian Hansen (ed.), *Sokrates Kirchengeschichte GCS* 57 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 316–17: VI.5, 317–22: VI.6, 325–26: VI.8.
  30. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2: On the Translation of Newly Acquired Relics* (PG 63, 467–72).
  31. For the most extensive works on the Trier ivory, see Suzanne Spain, ‘The Translation of Relics Ivory: Trier’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 279–304; Kenneth Holum and Gary Vikan, ‘The Trier Ivory, Adventus Ceremonial, and the Relics of Saint Stephen’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 33 (1979): 113–33; John Wortley, ‘The Trier Ivory Reconsidered’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21 (1980): 381–94; Laurie Wilson, ‘The Trier Procession Ivory: A New Interpretation’, *Byzantion* 45 (1984): 602–14; Leslie Brubaker, ‘The Chalke Gate, the Construction of the Past, and the Trier Ivory’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999): 258–85. For the ivory’s ideological significance with regard to the office of empress, see Liz James, ‘Goddess, Whore, Wife or Slave: Will the Real Byzantine Empress Please Stand Up?’ in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1997), 129–32.
  32. Wendy Mayer, ‘Doing Violence to the Image of an Empress: The Destruction of Eudoxia’s Reputation’, in *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices*, ed. Harold Allen Drake (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 205–13.

33. John H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, 'The Fall of John Chrysostom', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 29 (1985): 3. Testimonies of John's unjust treatment by his enemies are found in Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 905: VIII.8, 906: VIII.9, 913–14: VIII.14, 917: VIII.17; Bidez and Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 360: VIII.8, 361: VIII.9, 367: VIII.14, 371: VIII.17; Sokrates, *Church History*; Zenos (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 352: VI.3, 353: VI.4, 366: VI.10; Hansen (ed.), *Sokrates Kirchengeschichte*, 313–15: VI.3, 315–16: VI.4, 327–28: VI.10; Palladios, *The Dialogue of Palladius*; Herbert Moore (trans.), *The Dialogue of Palladius* (New York: Macmillan, 1921), 44–47; Anne-Marie Malingrey (ed.), *Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, SC 342 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1988), 118.100–126.166.
34. Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 907: VIII.10; Bidez and Hansen (ed.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 362: VIII.10.
35. Palladios, *The Dialogue of Palladius*; Moore (trans.), *The Dialogue*, 29, 48–49, 56; Malingrey (ed.), *Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, 36.9, 126.167–128.27, 142.23.
36. Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 916: VIII.16; Bidez and Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 370: VIII.16. Similarly in Sokrates, *Church History*; Zenos (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 374: VI.15: 'He soon after pronounced a public invective against women in general. The people readily took this as uttered indirectly against the empress and so the speech was laid hold of by evil-disposed persons, and reported to those in authority. At length on being informed of it the empress immediately complained to her husband, telling him that the insult offered to herself was equally an insult against him'; Hansen (ed.), *Sokrates Kirchengeschichte*, 336: VI.15: 'περὶ τὸν λόγον ἔτοιμος μὴ μελλήσας διέξεισι ψόγον κοινῶς κατὰ πασῶν γυναικῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ λαοῦ. Ἀρπάζει τὸ πλῆθος τὸν λόγον ὡς αἰνιγμα κατὰ τῆς βασιλίδος λεχθέν, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἐκληφθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν κακουργούντων εἰς γυνῶσιν ἄγεται τῶν κρατούντων. Γνοῦσα δὲ ἡ Αὐγούστα πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὴν οἰκείαν ὕβριν ὠδύρατο, αὐτοῦ ὕβριν εἶναι λέγουσα τὴν ἑαυτῆς?'
37. Sokrates, *Church History*; Zenos (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 378: VI.18; Hansen (ed.), *Sokrates Kirchengeschichte*, 341: VI.18. Similarly in Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), 'The Ecclesiastical History', 923: VIII.20: 'Not long after these occurrences the silver statue of the empress, which is still to be seen to the south of the church opposite the grand council-chamber, was placed upon a column of porphyry on a high platform, and the event was celebrated there

with applause and popular spectacles of dances and mimes, as was then customary on the erection of the statues of the emperors. In a public discourse to the people John charged that these proceedings reflected dishonor on the Church. This remark recalled former grievances to the recollection of the empress, and irritated her so exceedingly at the insult that she determined to convene another council. He did not yield, but added fuel to her indignation by still more openly declaiming against her in the church; and it was at this period that he pronounced the memorable discourse commencing with the words, ‘Herodias is again enraged; again she dances; again she seeks to have the head of John in a basin’; Bidez and Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 376: VIII.20: ‘Ὁὐ πολλῶ δὲ ὕστερον ἀνδριάντος ἀργυροῦ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως γαμετῆς ἐπὶ πορφυροῦ κίονος ἀνατεθέντος, ὃς καὶ νῦν ἐστὶ πρὸς μεσημβρίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας πρὸ τοῦ οἴκου τῆς μεγάλης βουλῆς ἐφ’ ὕψηλοῦ βήματος, κρότοι τε καὶ δημῶδεις θεαὶ ἀρχιστῶν τε καὶ μίμων ἐνθάδε ἐπετελοῦντο, ὡς ἔθος ἦν τότε ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναθέσει τῶν βασιλικῶν εἰκόνων. Ἐφ’ ὕβρει δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τάδε γεγενῆσθαι ἐν ὁμιλίᾳ πρὸς τὸν λαὸν ὁ Ἰωάννης διέβαλεν. Ἡ δὲ βασιλὶς ἐτι προσφάτου τῆς μνήμης οὐσης τῶν προτέρων λυπηρῶν ὡς ὕβρισιμένη πάλιν ἐμπίπλῃται θυμοῦ καὶ σύνοδον αὐτῆς ἐπιτελεῖσθαι ἐσπούδαζεν. Ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἐνεδίδου, ἀλλ’ ἐτι σαφέστερον ἐπ’ ἐκκλησίας λοιδορῶν αὐτὴν ἐξέκαυσε πρὸς ὄργην. Ἡνίκα δὴ τὸν αἰοιδιμον ἐκέεινον διεξῆλθε λόγον ἀρξάμενος ὧδε· “πάλιν Ἡρωδίας μαίνεται, πάλιν ἀρχεῖται, πάλιν Ἰωάννου τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐπὶ πίνακος σπουδάζει λαβεῖν”’.

38. Palladius, *The Dialogue of Palladius*; Moore (trans.), *The Dialogue*, 71–72; Malingrey (ed.), *Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, 178.264–49. A number of homilies still attributed to John, especially the ones in which Eudoxia is compared to Herodias, Jezebel, and Salome, are thought not to be genuine, see Chrysostomus Baur, *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit*, vol. 2 (Munich: M. Hueber, 1929–1930), 237, note 8.
39. Sozomenos, *Church History*; Hartranft (trans.), ‘The Ecclesiastical History’, 919–20: VIII.18; Bidez and Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 373: VIII.18.
40. Synesios, *On Imperial Rule*; Garzya, Terzaghi, and Lacombrade (eds.), *Opere di Sinesio*, 400–2.
41. See further Janet Nelson, ‘Queens as Jezebels: Brunhild and Balhild in Merovigian History’, in *Medieval Women: Essays Dedicated and Presented to Professor Rosalind M. T. Hill*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 31–77.
42. Ambrose, *Letter 20*; Mary Melchior Beyenka (trans.), *Letters, FC 26* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1954), 365–75: ‘Why should I tell of how Jezebel severely persecuted Elias, and Herodias



caused John the Baptist to be put to death? Individual women persecuted individual men, but in so far as my merits are far less, so are these trials of mine heavier. My strength is weaker, my danger greater. Women's fortune changes, their hatreds are replaced by others, their contrivances vary, they are following their elders and making a pretext [of protecting] the king from harm. What reason is there for such serious trials against a mere worm, except that they are persecuting not me but the Church?' (*PL* 16: 999.18): 'Quid dicam quod etiam Eliam Jezabel cruenta persecute est? quod Joannem Baptistam Herodias fecit occidi? Singulae tamen singulos, mihi quo minora long emerita, eo tentamenta graviora. Virtus infirmior, sed plus periculi. Succedunt sibi mulierum vices, alternantur odia, commenta variantur, seniors conveniuntur, praetextitur regis injuria. Quae ratio igitur est adversus hunc vermiculum gravioris tentationis, nisi quia non me, sed Ecclesiam persequuntur?'

43. Synesios, *On Imperial Rule*; Garzya, Terzaghi, and Lacombrade (eds.), *Opere di Sinesio*, 382–450. Synesios repeatedly referred to the dichotomy of ruler and tyrant, as displayed through the exercise, or the lack, of the virtue of prudence. He also underscored that as both male and female are necessary for the good organisation of the family, their role is equally important within the state for its defense and care.
44. Pseudo-Martyrios, *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom* (*PG* 65: 17); Timothy D. Barnes and George Bevan (trans.), *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, Translated Texts for Historians 60 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 88.87; Martin Wallraff (ed.), *Oratio funebris in laudem Sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi: epitaffio attribuito a Martirio di Antiochia*, *BHG* 871 (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2007), 142.87.
45. Elizabeth A. Clark, *Women in the Early Church*, Message of the Fathers of the Church 13 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 28–44.
46. Pseudo-Martyrios, *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*; Barnes and Bevan (trans.), *Funerary Speech*, 86.84; Wallraff (ed.), *Oratio funebris in laudem Sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi*, 140.84.
47. On the couple's concern for restoring peace in the Church through doctrinal compromises, and on the results of their initiatives, see Patrick T. R. Gray, 'The Legacy of Chalcedon: Christological Problems and Their Significance', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 215, 227–29; James Allan Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (London: Routledge, 1996), 102–3.
48. 'John of Ephesos, Lives of the Eastern Saints I–III'; E. W. Brooks, *PO* 17 (1923): 27, 35, 157, 195; *PO* 18 (1924): 529, 676, 690; *PO* 19 (1926): 153, 228.



49. Prokopios, *Secret History; Procopius: The Anecdota or Secret History*, Henry Bronson Dewing (trans.), LCL 290 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), 10.15.
50. Prokopios, *Secret History*; *ibid.*, 6.22, 9.32.
51. Prokopios, *Secret History*; *ibid.*, 13.7.
52. Leslie Brubaker, 'The Age of Justinian: Gender and Society', in *The Age of Justinian*, ed. Maas, 433–36; eadem, 'Sex, Lies and Textuality: The Secret History of Prokopios and the Rhetoric of Gender in Sixth-Century Byzantium', in *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M.H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 83–101; Stavroula Constantinou, 'Violence in the Palace: Rituals of Imperial Punishment in Prokopios' Secret History', in *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. Alexander Beihammer, Stavroula Constantinou, and Maria Parani (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 375–88.
53. Prokopios, *Secret History*; Dewing (trans.), *Procopius*, 13.1–3.
54. *Ibid.*, 15.17.
55. *Ibid.*, 15.18.
56. *Ibid.*, 15.2.
57. *Ibid.*, 15.21, 17.15.
58. *Ibid.*, 16.18.
59. *Ibid.*, 16.19.
60. *Ibid.*, 17.27.
61. John Chrysostom specifically wrote that 'anger is not good in general, but is when the moment requires it' (*In Praise of Saint Paul*); Auguste Piédagnel (ed.), *Panegyriques de saint Paul*, SC 300 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982), 288. Further on the good dynamic of emotions, see Maximos the Confessor, *Questions Addressed to Thalassius, Maximi Confessoris Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, ed. Carl Laga and Carlos Steel (Turnhout: Brepols, 1980).
62. Agapetos, *Advice to the Emperor Justinian*; Bell (trans.), *Three Political Voices*, 116.55; Riedigner (ed.), *Agapetos Diakonos*, 64.55.
63. Prokopios, *Secret History*; Dewing (trans.), *Procopius*, 16.23.
64. Agapetos, *Advice to the Emperor Justinian*; Bell (trans.), *Three Political Voices*, 115.49, 114.48, 120.66; Riedigner (ed.), *Agapetos Diakonos*, 60.49, 58.48, 70.66.
65. Prokopios, *Secret History*; Dewing (trans.), *Procopius*, 12.17.
66. On the demon of anger and its results, see, e.g., Evagrius Pontikos, *Praktikos*; John E. Bamberger (trans.), *The Praktikos and Chapters on Prayer* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1972), 21.20–22.23; Antoine Guillaumont and Claire Guillaumont (eds.), *Traité pratique ou le moine*, SC 171 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 548.205–54.23.

67. For a full discussion of the use of the title *Basileus* by Eirene, see Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Byzanz unter Eirene und Konstantin VI. (780–802)* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 277–79; Ludwig Burgmann, ‘Die Novellen der Kaiserin Eirene’, *Fontes Minores* 4 (1981): 1–36.
68. On emperors’ exemption from the law, see Milton V. Anastos, ‘CI. 1.14.4 and the Emperors’ Exemption from the Laws’, in *Sodalitas: Scritti in onore di Antonio Guarino*, ed. Antonio Guarino and Vincenzo Giuffrè, *Biblioteca di Labeo* 8 (Naples: Jovene, 1984/5), 1233–43.
69. Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*; Mango and Scott (trans.), *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 651; De Boor, *Theophanes Chronographia*, 474.14–18.
70. Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*; Mango and Scott (trans.), *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 549, 552, 621, 664, 642; De Boor, *Theophanes Chronographia*, 398.7–399.4, 440.18–401.3, 450.23–451.2, 467.17–27, 483.23–484.2.
71. Photios, *Letter to Khan Boris of Bulgaria*; Stratoudaki, *The Patriarch and the Prince*, 66.54; Laourdas and Westerink (eds.), *Photii Patriarchae*, 28.844–850. This connection between anger and reasoning was made clear enough a few years earlier by the theologian John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* (PG 94: 932); Stewart D. F. Salmond (trans.), ‘Exposition of the Orthodox Faith’, in *NPNF*, ed. Philip Schaff, vol. 9 (Oxford and New York: Christian Literature Company, 1899), XVI.623.
72. John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* (PG 94: XII.917–929); Salmond (trans.), ‘Exposition’, XII.615–19.
73. Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*; Mango and Scott (trans.), *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 563–65; De Boor (ed.), *Theophanes Chronographia*, 407.15–25, 408.18–21, 409.18–21.
74. Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*; Mango and Scott (trans.), *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 568, 572, 604; De Boor (ed.), *Theophanes Chronographia*, 409.30, 412.1, 436.25. Similar descriptions on the alleged ferocious blood-letting acts of Leo III and Constantine V were also included in eighth- and ninth-century *vitae*, such as those of Andrew in Tribunal (*BHG* 111), Kosmas the Hymnographer and John of Damascus (*BHG* 394), John of Damascus (*BHG* 884), John the Psychaites (*BHG* 896), Plato of Sakkoudion (*BHG* 1553), and Stephen the Younger (*BHG* 1666).
75. For studies concerned with the understanding of the several possibilities of emotions in past societies and cultures, see Angelos Chaniotis and Pierre Ducrey (eds.), *Unveiling Emotions II. Emotions in Greece and Rome: Texts, Images, Material Culture* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013); Susanna M. Braund and Glenn W. Most (eds.), *Ancient Anger:*

*Perspectives from Homer to Galen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007); Barbara H. Rosenwein (ed.), *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).



## Emotions on Stage: The ‘Manly’ Woman Martyr in the *Menologion of Basil II*

(Vat. Gr. 1613)

*Valentina Cantone*

The so-called ‘*Menologion of Basil II*’ (Vatican City, Vatican Library, Vat. Gr. 1613; hereafter: *Menologion of Basil II*), dated between 1001 and 1016, is a luxurious illustrated manuscript. Technically speaking, the codex is a version of the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* (hereafter: *Synax. CP*) and is the only illuminated copy of the textual recension.<sup>1</sup> The manuscript, considered a masterpiece of middle Byzantine art and named after the probable recipient, Emperor Basil II (976–1025),<sup>2</sup> includes 430 illuminations on gilded backgrounds.<sup>3</sup> Each page of parchment is divided into two similarly sized rectangles. One is reserved for short biographies of saints in liturgical order, with saint days from September to February, written by a single anonymous copyist.<sup>4</sup> The other part of the page displays an image. Eight illuminators from an imperial workshop in the capital were responsible for the illustrations.<sup>5</sup>

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A painting is a complex visual system whose elements have to be decoded, contextualised, and interpreted in order to yield meaning.<sup>6</sup> This epistemological statement is especially true when one approaches the study of the imagery in the Vat. Gr. 1613, where much of the sacred and martyrological narrative is theatrically staged.<sup>7</sup> This understanding will prove critical to the present discussion of the ‘male’ female martyr and her *mise-en-scène*.

Some 60% of the female figures depicted in *Menologion of Basil II* are martyrs.<sup>8</sup> Most often martyred by decapitation but occasionally crucified, beaten to death, or thrown into a fire, these women generally evince a fix gender identity. When clothed their femininity is signalled through long tunics or maphoria—occasionally suggesting breasts, sometimes wrongly placed anatomically—and long hair, which marks them as virgins.<sup>9</sup> Their femininity is further emphasised when they are represented as naked: they show big or small-nippled breasts.<sup>10</sup> Yet, in some images the fixed female sex is uncertain. Two different pictorial approaches are evidenced in such cases. One blends signs of femininity and masculinity such as emphasised musculature, maintaining the protagonist’s feminine appearance, and the other eliminates all or nearly all of the female sexual markers, including breasts and hair, thereby crossing the binary gender differentiation.

These images of female martyrs in the manuscript have never been examined from the point of view of gendered emotions. In the present chapter, I look at some of them, particularly the virgin martyrs,<sup>11</sup> whose fixed gender identity is destabilised by a series of external aspects and corporeal features that they share with male martyrs. I also contend that their acquired ‘masculinisation’ finds further expression in the placid and serene emotional façade they maintain, which is similarly employed in the depiction of their male counterparts. These premises draw on Stephanie Cobb’s discussion regarding early Christian hagiography. She argues that the gendered process evolves during martyrdom. Female manliness—equating imperviousness to suffering in stories about both men and women—helped to build the group identity of early Christians.<sup>12</sup> Whereas it presents a calm appearance, I contend that it is the dramatic scenic staging through compositional elements that suggests the emotional turmoil the characters experience during martyrdom. Finally, I suggest that the dramatic staging shared by both women and men was designed to engage the manuscript’s readership emotionally and create a re-enactment of the martyr’s dramatic moments. Relevant to this

suggestion is the fact that the pictorial construction in the manuscript is ultimately a male production: most Byzantine hagiographers were men,<sup>13</sup> as was the case with the illuminators of the codex and its owner, Basil II.

In the following pages I relate to such major issues as: how the 'manly' woman martyr is visually defined; which specific emotion is associated with this type of martyr; and the ways in which the emotions of the female martyrs belonging to this group match those of male martyrs. In combining traditional visual and textual analyses, I consider a few illustrations and their relation to the accompanying hagiographical text, the visual elements that create a feminine and/or a masculinised corporeality, and the theatrical setting and dramatic effects the illuminators employed to align female martyrs with their male counterparts, as well as to emotionally engage the viewers with their martyrdom.

In relation to hagiographical narratives, Stavroula Constantinou observes that 'theatricality and the insistence on corporeality are two of the most essential common elements between male and female martyr legends'.<sup>14</sup> In what follows, I embrace a similar observation and argue that in the *Menologion of Basil II* holy women's corporeality and the absence of any expression of emotionality often sets them on a conceptual and visual par with male martyrs.

### ABSENCE OF EMOTIONS

Imperturbability (ἀταραξία) in the face of martyrdom is preponderant throughout the *Menologion of Basil II*,<sup>15</sup> and it is characteristic of the visualisation of both male and female martyrs. A case in point is the scene depicting the martyrdom of Saint Eutropia headed by the title 'Ἀθλησις τῆς ἁγίας μάρτυρος Εὐτροπίας'.<sup>16</sup> The female figure is portrayed in the centre of a symmetrical composition, with her body as its axis. Looking at the scene, one gets the impression that it is set as a theatrical stage. Albeit that the few flowery bushes in the first plane of the picture indicate an outdoor scene, the martyrdom is deployed in an elaborate architectural setting with two lateral flat-roofed buildings connected by a porticoed colonnade; red draperies adorn both the structure's windows and the colonnade, suggesting the presence of an interior.<sup>17</sup> The flat gilded background of the farthest plane completes the composition.

The disposition of the protagonists—Saint Eutropia and two executioners—in front of the architectural complex conveys a sense of equilibrated order rhythmized by the columns imaged behind them.

The central and axial position of the saint's body in the composition emphasises her nakedness.<sup>18</sup> Her elongated and thin torso is covered only by a *cintus*, a short drapery, and her open arms are fastened with two cords to metal rings set, somewhat awkwardly, on the farthest plane, whereas the martyrdom takes place on the plane nearest the viewer. The male torturers are burning her arms with two torches placed at the level of her breast. An angel emerging from the gilded sky like a *deus ex machina* offers her refreshment, reminiscent of a similar narrative in the saint's Life. The saint gazes directly at the viewer, as if wishing to convey her fearlessness, actually her imperturbability, in the face of the horrendous tortures she is undergoing.

I argue that the visual elements detailed here were intentionally employed by the painter to construct the martyr as a feminine *alter ego* of the image of Christ on the cross, thereby rendering her once again a man of sorts.<sup>19</sup> The visual analogy between the torture of the female saint and that of Christ is equally conveyed by a mixing of female and male characteristics, which helps to blur her distinctive sex. Thus, where her nipples and long hair clearly establish her femininity, the musculature of her arms, abdomen and legs are reminiscent of similar depictions of male martyrs throughout the manuscript.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas in the case of Saint Eutropia, despite some acquired male bodily characteristics, the viewer of the manuscript is still sure regarding her sexual identity—it is evident that the saint is a woman—there is a series of painted female figures whose external appearance conveys sexual ambiguity. I am referring specifically to female saints who are wearing long tunics just like their male counterparts and do not evidence any feminine sexual markers; moreover, their hair is shorn or they are completely bald, creating further gender uncertainty. Or, in other words, their external appearance obfuscates any specific binary gender identification, and the only key to their sexual identification is the text of their Lives in the codex. I argue that they belong to what is critically termed a 'third gender'.<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that in all of these images the female saints remain imperturbable in face of their martyrdom.

One specific image is that of Iouliane and her companions, headed by the title *The Contest of the Saintly Martyr Iouliane* ("Ἀθλησις τῆς ἁγίας μάρτυρος Ἰουλιανῆς").<sup>22</sup> According to her Life that is included in the *Menologion of Basil II*, Iouliane was a beautiful virgin from Nicomedia betrothed from an early age to Eleusius, a senator and advisor to the Roman emperor. When the time of her wedding approached, she refused

to go through with the marriage. Her father urged her not to break her engagement, but to no avail. Then the prefect ordered her tortured, along with other people who accompanied her, as the text further relates: 'The eparch combed her entire body and he had her hung from the hair and the skin of her head was removed. Then she had her thrown to the fire'.<sup>23</sup> Eventually she died by decapitation.

The illumination captures the last dramatic moment of Iouliane's life, as she offers her hairless head to the Roman executioner. Her Christian companions are already lying dead on the ground. As in the previous miniatures, the martyred saint is standing in the centre of the composition; actually, her body establishes the axial point of the composition, attracting the viewer's gaze. The depiction of the martyrdom is carefully staged on a landscape, with rocks and bushes (first plane), trees and mountains (intermediary plane), and the repetitive gilded background (third plane).

Hair cutting or head shaving as customary practices intended to humiliate prisoners coercing them into submission are constant biblical motifs.<sup>24</sup> However, shaving a woman's long hair, which was considered a female attribute,<sup>25</sup> constitutes an attack to her femininity. The hairless Iouliane is thus put on a par with a male martyr. Support for the conceptualisation of Iouliane as male is also found in her lack of emotion at the moment of her decapitation and her brave acceptance of her fate.<sup>26</sup> Here, as in other decapitation scenes, one can see the sheer force of the executioner about to wield his sword on her naked neck. The dynamics of the male gesture are contrasted with Iouliane's passive acceptance of death as expressed in her bowed and calm posture, as well as in her serene facial expression.

One can add to the group of female martyrs whose feminine markers are absent Eugenia of Alexandria, who is the only cross-dressing saint represented in the *Menologion of Basil II*.<sup>27</sup> The short Life accompanying the illustration states that she was the daughter of a Roman prefect, Philip, who was sent by Emperor Commodus (180–192) to rule the province of Egypt. Desiring to become a Christian, she cross-dressed and retired to a monastery. Being beardless, she pretended to be a eunuch called Eugenios: 'Then she left the paternal glory and she entered a monastery, and she was baptised, and she became a monastic, but by adopting male attire. She thus called herself a eunuch even though she was a woman in a man's attire'.<sup>28</sup> As soon as her father found out about her new identity, he converted to Christianity along



with his wife. Shortly afterwards, when he became bishop of Alexandria, he was killed by the sword in the city's church, as indicated in the *Menologion*: 'All of them received the martyrdom's end'.<sup>29</sup> The *Synax. CP* provides more details concerning Eugenia's life. For example, it offers a slightly different version of the killing of Philip: 'The faithless killed him by the sword within the church',<sup>30</sup> and it also notes that the martyrdom of Eugenia and her companions took place in Rome and not in Egypt: 'Saint Eugenia of Rome is taken with her mother, her brothers and the eunuchs Protos and Hyacinth, who suffered with her from the beginning'.<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, the illustration reflects both versions of the Life.

The left-hand side of the miniature depicts the killing of the grey-haired, bearded Philip by swords (!), rather than a knife as mentioned in the Life, in front of his church. In the centre, one can see Eugenia's mother (clad in a blue tunic striated with chrysography) and her two brothers covered in blood lying dead on the ground. To the far right side, there are two eunuchs awaiting their fate. Eugenia/Eugenios is calmly and submissively standing in the centre offering her neck to the Roman executioner, who brandishes the sword with which he will decapitate her. Belying the manly appearance of the martyr saint is the heading title that denominates her according to her true gender 'The Contest of Saint Eugenia' ('Ἀθλησις τῆς ἁγίας μάρτυρος Εὐγενίας'). Indeed, Symeon the illuminator chose to cross over her gender and painted her as a beardless youth closely resembling the two eunuchs. Her tranquil, untroubled face does not disclose any emotion. As in the image of Saint Iouliane, the cross-dressing martyr directs her gaze towards the viewer,<sup>32</sup> as if inviting him to engage with her suffering, if only mentally and momentarily. As in other scenes of martyrdom, the painter used compositional dynamic lines to build up not one but two dramatic peaks: the first is expressed in the pyramidal construction showing the martyrdom of Philip and the other is shaped as a sharp-angled triangle imaging Saint Eugenia and her executioner.<sup>33</sup>

The saintly female figures discussed above do not evince the feelings that Byzantine culture traditionally associated with female weakness; on the contrary, they exhibit an emotional detachment, *ataraxia*; they are willing to meet their violent deaths, which will allow them to join with Christ. All, or nearly all, female martyrs are by definition manly since the texts designate their martyrdom by the term 'ἄθλησις' (contest), and this is where manly courage comes into play.

## FEAR

To give weight to the interrelationship between imperturbability and the manly femininity attested in the case of the virgin martyrs, I now juxtapose the forms and modalities of the absence of emotion to the emotion of fear. In Byzantine culture, fear (‘φόβος’) is understood as a sort of a movement (‘κίνησις’), a spiritual motion, which is an internal experience and at the same time an external movement. It involves both mind and body, which are both shaken by the physical reaction provoked by fear and the simultaneous attempt to escape from it.<sup>34</sup> The visual representation of fear includes two main elements: a conventional gesture and its possible trigger—be it Divine, human, or animalistic.<sup>35</sup> Codified as early as in ancient Greek art, the iconography of fear persists in early Christian art.<sup>36</sup> An illustrative example is the scene of *The Ascension of Enoch* and his four sons on one of the panels of the wooden doors of the Basilica of Santa Sabina in Rome (422–440 CE), recently identified as such by Ivan Foletti.<sup>37</sup> The protagonists’ gestures clearly visualise various aspects of fear experienced at the view of the supernatural event: the terrifying thrill of their souls animate their bodies into unnatural movements, shaking arms with hands wide open, while their visages are transfixed by terror.

In the *Menologion of Basil II*, fear is expressed in numerous miniatures, either when the protagonists attempt to flee their cruel torturers and evade imminent death or when a miracle occurs.<sup>38</sup> The illuminators conveyed the fright and the pertinent state of mind of the protagonists through body language, particularly hand gestures. The hands are raised above the head<sup>39</sup> or placed in front of the breast.<sup>40</sup> In some cases, the holy martyr seizes his or her head expressing fear, pain, and desperation all at the same time.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, in some compositions the painters enhanced the visual impact of fear—common to both men and women—by using colours and a dramatic layout of figures and landscapes.

The representation of the *One Thousand and Three Martyrs at Nicomedia* as the title heading the accompanying text indicates, ‘Αθλησις τῶν ἁγίων χιλίων τριῶν μαρτύρων τῶν ἐν Νικομηδείᾳ μαρτυρησάντων’, exemplifies the above generalisations and the theatrical arrangement of characters conveying emotions.<sup>42</sup> The painter grouped all martyrs, both male and female, in a pyramidal composition deployed against a mountainous landscape and a shimmering gold background. Most of the martyrs are dead: their bodies are stretched, faced down and they are covered with blood. There appear to be only

two martyrs—a man and a woman—still alive. They are gesticulating with open palms, expressing fear in the face of imminent death. The pyramidal composition connects all martyrs through dynamic oblique and diagonal lines shaping sharp triangles, exuding a sense of emotional tension. All the while dynamic lines and angles invite the viewers to let their gaze wander from one to another of the elements that construct the animated scene, even when it is clear that most of the martyrs are already dead. It can be fairly assumed that contemplation of the image would have stirred the viewers into identifying with the pain and death of the martyrs. The dynamic composition stands in stark contrast to the flat, golden back plane of the image, hence clearly drawing an invisible line between the upper part of the illustration and the lower, at eye-level scene. Dominating the human pyramid are the tall Roman soldiers, who are clad in short colourful tunics and are menacingly brandishing their swords. The particular disposition of the executioners above the martyrs, their powerful gestures and the contrast of the white swords against the gilded background are among the visual artifices the artist used to enhance the dramatic and emotional effects of this illumination.

Placed in the centre of the pyramidal construction, thus expediting a sense of importance, the male and female martyrs that are still alive are distinguished from the rest of the group. They convey their fear through the traditional visual formula: agitated movements of the body and the raising of hands, palms open. Moreover, whereas their eyes look towards the executioner who is about to strike them to death, their bodies are twisted in a countermovement, as if they are attempting to flee the scene. To the gestural body language, one can also add the ‘reality’ of the torture weapons that may have contributed to the construction of the atmosphere of fear hovering above the scene.<sup>43</sup> Taken together, stylistic and compositional elements and strategies and the use of traditional visual formulae helped the artist in staging the emotion of fear.

The *Synax. CP* reports that the 1003 martyrs of Nicomedia were servants of the 4 tribunals who captured Saint Peter of Alexandria and beheaded him (24 November):

These were servants of the four tribunals who arrested Saint Peter, the bishop of Alexandria, and decapitated him. When after his death, the tribunals believed wholly in Christ and suffered in His name, their servants, being inflamed by their faith in Christ, they went to the emperor Dioclecian. After having confessed that they were Christians, they were cut into pieces by the army.<sup>44</sup>

After his death, these four tribunals converted to Christianity together with their entire households and also became martyrs. Their servants, inflamed by faith in Christ, confessed their faith to Emperor Diocletian, which led to the imperial soldiers cutting their bodies into pieces. Some *synaxaria selecta*, which add a dramatic element to the narration, are pertinent for our discussion. They explicitly note that the men were all killed with their wives, children and nursing infants (‘σὺν γυναιξὶ καὶ παιδίοις καὶ βρέφεσι’).<sup>45</sup> It is plausible to assume that this addition, which does not appear in the *Synax. CP* and was thus taken from another *synaxarion* having a more complete version than the short one contained in the *Menologion of Basil II*, was possibly instrumental in the staging of fear as expressed by the still alive martyrs. How does this suggestion relate to the subject of the present chapter?

As indicated above the expression of fear in this scene is not gender-specific, but is shared by both male and female martyrs. I would tentatively suggest that the expression of fear would have been more appropriate for conveying the emotional state of married women martyrs, whose social roles defined them as wives and or mothers. In these social roles, they would have more to lose than the virgin martyrs—their husbands and children for whom they fear. In the *Menologion of Basil II*, there is a series of scenes that support this suggestion. A good example is the martyrdom of saint Kyriakos and his elderly mother. The mother watches her son’s suffering in the fire with visible anguish and fear, which are expressed through the turned down slant of the corners of her mouth, wide open eyes staring at her son, and her eyebrows slightly pushed together and arched.<sup>46</sup>

A central premise of this chapter is that the virgin martyr is conceptually constructed as manly through a series of devices. The first is visual: the gender identity of the female body is either kept—it is entirely feminine through the correspondent sexual markers—or blurred by the appearance of male characteristics such as evident musculature. The second is ideological: the visual association with the Crucifixion. A third device is linguistic-conceptual, and also ideological: virgin martyrs, along with their male counterparts, are presented as combatants in their struggle (*athlesis*) for the Christian faith, bravely, and therefore manly, accepting their deaths at the hands of pagans. The last device is the absence of any emotion (*ataraxia*). Taking the usual association of women with emotionality in Byzantine culture into account led to virgin martyrs who were depicted without any display of emotion as being seen as men

rather than women. All in all, these female protagonists share with their male counterparts a rhetoric role, at both visual and textual levels. They function as pictorial *topoi*, theatrically arranged to stir the viewer's and reader's emotive and empathetic responses.

## NOTES

1. A collection of relatively long saints' Passions and Lives arranged according to their celebration dates in the church calendar; Helene Deliyanni-Doris, 'Menologion', in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel and Marcell Restle, 7 vols. (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1963–1966), VI: 144–47. The *menologion* was essentially a liturgical book read throughout the year during the *orthros*, the morning office on the day's specific saints: Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, 'El 'Menologio de Basilio II' y los 'Menologios imperiales', in d'Aiuto and Pérez Martín, *El 'Menologio de Basilio II' original conservado en la Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Vat. Gr. 1613* (Vatican City, Athens, and Madrid: Testimonio Compañía Editorial, 2008), 231–59; repr. in Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Celebration of the Saints in Byzantine Art and Liturgy* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), part II, 26–27. The *arion*, actually a lectionary, consists of a complete list of all the saints and a catalogue of the hymns and biblical readings prescribed for their feast days, following a certain pattern: the biblical characters and scenes; the prophets, patriarchs, and apostles; the martyrs, whose vitae are given as short notices; the ascetics; the bishops; and the imperial saints. Furthermore, the text contains information on which day and where in the city the commemoration of particular saints, translations of relics, and great feasts took place; Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1959, 1977), 251–52. For the *Synax. CP*, see *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902, 1970).
2. Augusta Acconcia Longo, 'El poema introductorio en dodecasílabos bizantinos', in *El 'Menologio'*, ed. D'Aiuto and Martín, 77.
3. Pio Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Il Menologio di Basilio II (Cod. Vat. greco 1613)* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca, 1907). See also, Valentina Cantone, 'L'immagine di Simeone Stilita il Vecchio nel menologio di Basilio II', *Rivista di Storia della miniatura* 20 (2016): 53; Anna Zakharova, 'Gli otto artisti del Menologio di Basilio II', *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae*, 10 (2003): 379–432.
4. *El 'Menologio'*, ed. D'Aiuto and Martín, 96–106.

5. Pantoleon seems to have been in charge of the group, and the one who depicted most of the illuminations. The other artists who created some of the images were: Georgios, Michael the Younger, Michael of Blachernai, Simeon, Simeon of Blachernai, Menas, and Nestor: Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, XVI–XVIII. Their names were written by the copyist near each illumination, but there are some doubts about the authorship of the paintings because the stylistic analysis has revealed some incongruence in the connection between the names and the pictures: Anna Zakharova, 'Los ocho artistas del Menologio de Basilio II', in *El 'Menologio'*, ed. D'Aiuto and Martín, 180–86.
6. Umberto Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale* (Milan: Bompiani, 1975), 256, 279–82.
7. Anestis Vasilakeris, 'Theatricality of Byzantine Images: Some Preliminary Thoughts', in *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Arzu Öztürkmen et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 385–98.
8. Female figures—virgins, martyrs, saints, empresses—feature in 109 scenes out of 430.
9. Saints: Thuthael and Bebea, p. 16; Maximus, Theodotus, and Asclepiodota, p. 39; Gaiana and Ripsima, p. 75; Menas, Victor, Vincent, and Stefanis, p. 174; Theodota and Socrates, p. 132; Mark, Sotericos, and Valentina, p. 140; Zenobius and Zenobia, p. 150; Azes and companions, p. 191; Cecilia, Tiburtius, and Valerian, p. 201; Indes and Domna, p. 278; and Blaise and companions, p. 390.
10. Saints: Epicharis, p. 69; Eulampius and Eulampia, p. 103; Eutropia, p. 149; Antony, Melasippus, and Casinis, p. 165; Agatha, p. 373, Martha and Mary, p. 385.
11. It has to be pointed out that most of the female characters represented in the examined manuscript are young virgins, as was the case with the large majority of female martyrs: Stavroula Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances: Reading the Body in Byzantine Passions and Lives of Holy Women*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 9 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2005), 19–58.
12. Stephanie L. Cobb, *Dying to Be Men: Gender and Language in Early Martyr Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).
13. For the androcentric character of Byzantine hagiography, see Stavroula Constantinou, 'Subgenre and Gender in Saints' Lives', in *Les Vies des saints à Byzance: genre littéraire au biographie historique?* ed. Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis Agapitos (Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes; École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2004), 411–23; eadem, *Female Corporeal Performances*, 11–18.

14. Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances*, 21. For theatricality in hagiography, see also, eadem, 'Subgenre and Gender in Saints' Lives', 'Performing Gender in the Lives of Lay Saints', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 38.1 (2014): 24–32 and 'Holy Actors and Actresses: Fools and Cross-Dressers as the Protagonists of Saints' Lives', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 2: *Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 345–64.
15. For the martyrs' imperturbability, see Deborah Niederer Saxon, *The Care of the Self in Early Christian Texts* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 31–54.
16. Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, 149, [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613/0171](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0171). The scene was probably depicted by Pantoleon, even if the name written near the painting is that of Georgios: Zakharova, 'Gli otto artisti', 387; eadem, 'Los ocho artistas', 178.
17. Claudia Barsanti, 'Le architetture *ad limitem* del Menologio di Basilio II (codice Vaticano Greco 1613) e la miniatura con la commemorazione del patriarca Ignazio', *Commentari* 28 (1977): 3–25.
18. On nudity in Byzantine art, see Mati Meyer, 'Eve's Nudity: A sign of Shame or Precursor of Christological Economy?' in *Between Judaism and Christianity: Art Historical Essays in Honor of Elisheva Revel-Neher*, ed. Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer (Boston: Brill, 2009), 243–58; Barbara Zeitler, 'Ostentatio Genitalium: Displays of Nudity in Byzantium', in *Desire and Denial in Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-first Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Liz James (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 185–201.
19. Depictions of female martyrs with their arms wide open, as here, or tied behind the back, displaying the naked upper part of the body thereby associating them with the figure of Christ on the cross are the following: saints: Stefanis, p. 174; Agatha, p. 373; and Martha and Mary, p. 385. For a discussion of this idea, see Nathalie Delierneux, 'Virilité physique et sainteté féminine dans l'hagiographie orientale du IV<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Byzantion* 67 (1997): 186; Martha Easton, 'Saint Agatha and the Sanctification of Sexual Violence', *Studies in Iconography* 16 (1994): 94.
20. Support for this argument can be found, e.g. in the figures of saints: Galasios, p. 161; Phillippos the apostle, p. 182; and the group of male martyrs, p. 336.
21. Kathryn Ringrose, 'Living in the Shadows: Eunuchs and Gender in Byzantium', in *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, ed. Gilbert Herdt (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 1996), 85–109, 507–18; eadem, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

22. Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, 261, [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613/0283](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0283). Several other female figures belong to this group, such as saints Tatiana (p. 311) and Charitine (p. 92).
23. ‘Ὁ δὲ ἐπαρχος ἔξεσεν ὄλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν τριχῶν ἐκρέμασε καὶ ἐξέδειρε τὸ δέρμα τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς· εἶτα ἐνέβαλεν εἰς πῦρ’; The English translations of all Byzantine passages discussed in this article have been made by Stavroula Constantinou.
24. Genesis 41:14; Amos 8: 10.
25. Song of Songs, 7: 6.
26. Beheading is the most frequent execution presented in the *Menologion of Basil II*. See, e.g. saints: Eudoxios and Romulos, and their male companions, p. 18; Maximos, Theodotos, and Asklipodota, p. 39; Porphyry, p. 41.
27. Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, 270, [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613/0292](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0292).
28. ‘Εἶτα ἀφῆκε τὴν πατρικὴν δόξαν· καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς μοναστήριον· καὶ ἐβαπτίσθη· καὶ γέγονε μοναχὴ· ἀλλ’ ἐν σχήματι ἀνδρείῳ· καὶ γὰρ ἑαυτὴν εὐνοῦχον ἔλεγεν εἶναι ἐν σχήματι ἀνδρὸς γυνῆ οὐσα’; Delehaye, *Synaxarium* II, 341. For cross-dressing saints, see, e.g. John Anson, ‘The Female Transvestite in Early Monasticism: The Origin and Development of a Motif’, *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 5 (1974): 1–32; Constantinou, *Female Corporeal Performances*, 90–126 and eadem, ‘Holy Actors and Actresses’; Lone Fatum, ‘Image of God and Glory of Man: Women in Pauline Congregations’, in *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judeo-Christian Tradition*, ed. Kari E. Børresen (Oslo: Sorum Forlag, 1995), 56–137; Crystal Lynn Lubinsky, *Removing Masculine Layers to Reveal a Holy Womanhood: The Female Transvestite Monks of Late Antique Eastern Christianity*, *Studia Traditionis Theologiae, Explorations in Early and Medieval Theology* 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). On the interrelation between beard and masculinity, see Shaun Tougher, ‘Bearding Byzantium: Masculinity, Eunuchs and the Byzantine Life Course’, in *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, ed. Bronwen Neil et al. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 153–66.
29. ‘ἅπαντες τὸ διὰ μαρτυρίου τέλος ἐδέξαντο’.
30. Delehaye, *Synaxarium* II, 342: ‘τῶν ἀπίστων ἐν τῷ ναῷ καὶ ἀνελόντων μαχαίρα’.
31. Delehaye, *Synaxarium* II, 342–43: ‘Ἡ δὲ ἁγία Εὐγενία ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἀπάγεται μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν καὶ Πρωτῶ καὶ Υακίνθου τῶν εὐνούχων τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς αὐτῇ συγκακοπαθησάντων’.
32. The manuscript includes another image of a holy woman, saint Theonilla, who looks like a eunuch as does saint Eugenia, but without being a cross-dresser; Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, 147. In this case, the visual construction of the scene underscores the body of the saintly woman through the exposure of her ambiguous nudity, without any trace of female sexual markers.



33. Myrto Hatzaki, *Beauty and the Male Body in Byzantium: Perceptions and Representations in Art and Text* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 86–115; Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant*, 142–62; Karen J. Torjesen, ‘Martyrs, Ascetics and Gnostics: Gender-crossing in Early Christianity’, in *Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Sabrina Page Ramet (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 86: ‘For ascetic women gender-crossing meant more than becoming male, it meant in some way transcending gender altogether’.
34. Nemesios, *On Human Nature* (PG 40, 688B–689). S.v. ‘fear’; Alexander A. Kazhdan et al. (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2: 780–81. See also Martin Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 123–34.
35. Elementary emotions such as fear and their behavioural—corporeal and facial—expressions may transcend cultures and periods: Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen, ‘Constants Across Cultures in the Face and Emotion’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 17.2 (1971): 124–29; Paul Ekman, Richard E. Sorenson, and Wallace V. Friesen, ‘Pan-Cultural Elements in Facial Displays of Emotion’, *Science, New Series* 164 (1969): 86–88.
36. Maria Patera, ‘Reflections on the Discourse of Fear in Greek Sources’, in *Unveiling Emotions II. Emotions in Greece and Rome: Texts, Images, Material Culture*, HABES 55, ed. Angelos Chaniotis and Pierre Ducrey (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2014), 109–34. Valentina Cantone, ‘Formes de la peur dans l’art byzantin: images, contextes, modèles’, and Athanasios Semoglou, ‘Craindre Dieu: illustrations de la terreur et *mise en scène* de la peur dans l’art chrétien de l’antiquité tardive’. Both essays will be published in *Saisir et gérer la peur: anthropologie de la peur en Grèce de l’antiquité à l’ère chrétienne, Colloque international, Athènes, 13–16 septembre 2017* (forthcoming).
37. Ivan Foletti and Manuela Gianandrea, *Zona liminare: Il nartece di Santa Sabina a Roma, la sua porta e l’iniziazione Cristiana* (Rome: Viella, 2015), 167–72, fig. 9.
38. Saint Ammoun the Deacon and the Forty Holy Virgins, p. 4; The holy virgins Menodora, Nymphodora and Metrodora, p. 26; martyr Mamelcta the Persian, p. 91; the Commemoration of the Falling of Ash from the Sky in 472 AD, p. 164; the holy Martyr Anysia of Thessaloniki, p. 283; saint Tryphena, p. 362; saints Perpetua and Felicita and their companions, p. 366.
39. Saint Tryphenia, p. 362.
40. Saints Perpetua and Felicita, p. 366.
41. Saint Mamelcta, p. 91.

42. Cavalieri, *Il Menologio*, 379, [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613/0402](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0402). The scene was painted by Pantaleon or Georgios: Zakharova, 'Gli otto artisti', 384–93, fig. 4.
43. On Byzantine weapons see, e.g. Eric McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth: Byzantine Warfare in the Tenth Century* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2008).
44. 'Οὗτοι οἰκέται ὑπῆρχον τῶν τεσσάρων προδικτόρων, ὑφ'ἧν κατεσχέθη ὁ ἅγιος Πέτρος ὁ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρέων ἐπίσκοπος καὶ ἀπετμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν. Μετὰ γὰρ τὴν τούτου τελευτὴν τῶν προδικτόρων πιστευσάντων πανοικί τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἀθλησάντων, οἱ τούτων δοῦλοι τῇ εἰς Χριστὸν πυροῦμενοι πίστει ἠὲ τομολήσαν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Διοκλητιανὸν πανοικί ἐν Νικομηδεῖα καὶ ὁμολογήσαντες εἶναι χριστιανοὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ στρατοῦ ἐν μαχαίραις κατεκόπησαν': Delehaye, *Synaxarium*, 459–60.
45. Delehaye, *Synaxarium*, 449–50 (7 Feb.).
46. p. 144; Cavalieri, *Il menologio*, 42 (PG 117: 132B–C); *Synax. CPOct.* 28, par. 10 (cols. 170–71).

PART IV

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Men, Women and Erotic Passion



## *Eros* as Passion, Affection and Nature: Gendered Perceptions of Erotic Emotion in Byzantium

*Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson*

Even though love at first sight, which often initiates an erotic experience, is described as an emotional episode of short duration and intensity, erotic love is much more than one emotion and even more than a simple conglomeration of emotions—it is a complex relational system that manages a remarkable number of emotions as much on the psychological level as in its bodily manifestations. Owing to the multiplicity and duration of erotic experience, love is often associated rather with feelings: the latter indicate mental dispositions that are more durable than the more or less ‘instinctive’ emotions. Each culture defines in its own way the emotional baggage of erotic

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and amorous feelings and emotions, exploits its various contents differently, and emphasizes some of its aspects and manifestations.<sup>1</sup> More importantly, perceptions of erotic love reveal significant things about the culture that produces them, since treatments of eroticism encompass some of the most eloquent ways of thinking broadly about society and its organization.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter we explore some Byzantine literary perceptions of love in order to understand better the mental and emotional universe of the Byzantines. However, one has to be aware of the fact that this emotional world is mediated by texts and thus complies with the processes of their composition.<sup>3</sup> The emotions presented in the texts are therefore doubly performative: the characters of the narratives ‘perform’ erotic love through a series of emotional manifestations, while the authors convey meaning to the body, to the relations between the sexes and to the literary treatment of eroticism through the narrated emotions. A second issue that one should keep in mind concerns the gendered differentiation of erotic emotions. Various approaches to and theories of emotivity have been presented ever since classical antiquity. Such approaches often introduce a carefully coded grammar of emotions more or less strictly divided between men and women. They thus create a kind of emotional rhetoric that must adhere to sexual diversity. Byzantine literature from the fourth to the fifteenth century follows the classical elaborations on the subject closely. However, a new perspective was added by Christianity, which proposes its own discussion on emotivity in general and on the erotic phenomenon more particularly. It should be noted that Christianity did not aim to replace the ancient theories of the body and its function, but to elaborate and incorporate them into the logic of divine providence.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, one of the concerns of the present chapter is to investigate to what extent there are erotic emotions that are typically ‘feminine’, erotic emotions that are typically ‘masculine’ and erotic emotions that can be shared by both sexes. In the Byzantine intellectual landscape there are three major discursive ways of approaching eroticism.<sup>5</sup> In all three cases, cultural rationalizations construct the erotic experience as a meaningful ‘reality’. The first approach characterizes narratives that may be described as ‘fictional’: the novel, but also much of hagiography and historiography, erotic poetry and progymnasmata. In these narratives, erotic love—always an external force that violently imposes itself upon the protagonists—is invested with a multitude of emotional expressions that influence the psyche of the person in question and transform it in positive or negative terms. The second approach circumvents the question of the violence of

erotic emotions and replaces it with an emotivity of amorous affection. In this case, the emotions are not provoked by external stimuli, but they have an internal or innate origin, they represent clear dispositions of the soul, and may be described rather as feelings. This approach belongs to the discourse on marriage and the love that must preside over it, as well as to the discourse on friendship and parental bonds. It is present in numerous kinds of Byzantine texts, but does not receive as much elaboration as that of erotic love. The third approach completely removes emotions from the discussion on eroticism. On the one hand, there is the scientific medical discourse (to which the Christian theory of the physiology of the human body was attached), which presents love as a result of the chemistry of humours and tries to understand the mechanisms of desire that motivate it; on the other, there is the legal discourse that reduces erotic desire to acts that are mostly transgressive, generally devoid of any trace of emotion.

These three approaches do not have strict or well-defined boundaries beyond the methodological needs of this investigation. In fact, their outlines are quite fluid and all three basically presuppose a common perception of the erotic phenomenon, diversified according to the need of each narrative logic. Given that our focus here is on emotions, the section devoted to passionate love is considerably longer than the following two sections, which are devoted to the kinds of love that minimize or even completely remove emotions from the amorous frame.

### HEIGHTENED EMOTIONS: THEORIES OF PASSIONATE LOVE

As already noted, both the love of the novel—the ancient as well as the Byzantine twelfth-century novel—and the temptations of hagiography and several erotic accounts in historiography belong to this category of erotic discourse.<sup>6</sup> All these texts share a common perception of the erotic phenomenon and its emotional symptomatology. They operate, however, with two complementary and at the same time antagonistic models of desire: the *realistic* model and the *utopian* model. Both are closely related to the age of the protagonists and to the role of desire in the formation of their characters. The desire of the two novelistic protagonists for each other belongs to the utopian model, whereas the desire that they provoke in adults, barbarian men and wanton women, belongs to the realistic model.

In hagiography and historiography, as we shall see below, scenes of love that society considers as ‘real’ and effective dominate.<sup>7</sup> In the utopian world of adolescents, desire (*eros*)—despite or because of the

violence that it generates—becomes a constitutive element of the maturity of the subject; it strengthens the young and leads them into the adult world.<sup>8</sup> By contrast, in the realistic world of adults, *eros* and its emotivity are presented as threats that can destabilize the personality of the young individual in question; it weakens his/her body and exposes him/her to multiple dangers, spiritual as well as corporeal. In the novel, the deliberately utopian character of the intrigue and the tension between adolescents and adults are the principal axes of the plot. For hagiography and historiography, the realistic choice that deals with the adult world defines the perception of desire and its emotional weight.

Although in ancient and Byzantine thought, erotic love was ‘one of the greatest and most vehement passions of the soul’ (‘καὶ τῶν ἐρωτικῶν, ἃ δὴ μέγιστα καὶ σφοδρότατα παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς ἐστίν’),<sup>9</sup> it was the bodies of the protagonists that were put forward within the framework of performance imposed by the narratives. The texts present heroes who are characterized by their superemotivity and build a dramaturgy of desire that generates and mixes contrary emotions (pleasure/pain, hope/anguish) beyond the characters’ control.<sup>10</sup> First of all, one must note the remarkable semantic fluidity among the terms *eros*, *agape*, *pathos* and several other words that function as their synonyms (*pothos*, *philia*, *epithymia*, *storge*). It is the context that reveals the true sense, erotic or affectionate, of each term. To cite just one example, drawn from the novelistic *Digenis Akritis*:

And immediately I remind you about passion (*eros*),  
for this is established as the root and beginning of love (*agape*),  
from which affection (*philia*) is begotten, the desire (*pathos*) is born,  
which as it increases gradually bears such fruit  
as constant anxieties, worries and concerns  
and immediately brings abundant dangers and separation from  
parents.

For youth in its prime breaks hearts,  
then dares every deed that has never been ventured  
[...]  
and many renounce their faith because of desire.

Καὶ εὐθὺς περὶ ἔρωτος ὑμᾶς ἀναμιμνήσκω.  
ρίζα γὰρ οὗτος καὶ ἀρχὴ καθέστηκεν ἀγάπης,  
ἐξ ἧς φιλία τίκτεται, εἶτα γεννᾶται πόθος,  
ὃς ἀξήθεις κατὰ μικρὸν φέρει καρπὸν τοιοῦτον,

μερίμνας μὲν διηνεκεῖς, ἐννοίας καὶ φροντίδας,  
 εὐθὺς κινδύνους παμπληθεῖς καὶ χωρισμὸν γονέων.  
 Νεότης γὰρ ἀκμάζουσα καρδίας ἀνασπάει,  
 εἶτα πάντα κατατολμᾷ τῶν ἀνεπιχειρήτων  
 [...]  
 πολλοὶ καὶ πίστιν τὴν αὐτῶν ἀρνοῦνται διὰ πόθον.<sup>11</sup>

In this address to the audience, the author presented all the terms related to love (*eros*, *agape*, *philia*, *pathos*) and combined them interchangeably in a synthesis that aspired to the creation of a unified phenomenon of love—reduced, in fact, in accordance with novelistic conventions, to passionate love or desire.

According to this narrative logic, *eros* is an all-powerful and always formidable emotion, for it ‘tyrannizes adolescents, young men, adult men. [...] Woe your tyranny and your strength, o *eros*’ (‘καὶ τυραννεῖς καὶ μείρακας καὶ νέους καὶ τελείους. [...] βαβαὶ τῆς τυραννίδος σου καὶ τῆς ἀνάγκης, ἔρωσ’).<sup>12</sup> *Eros* was presented as a borderline situation, most often as an illness and a state of extreme emotional arousal, a *pathos*, which had a clear emotional symptomology and deprived its victims of corporeal and psychological control.<sup>13</sup> The *eros* of the novels encourages a dangerous submission, the abolition of reason, the transformation of a social being into a marginal existence. Based on *Digenis Akritis* and the twelfth-century novels, we look at the way in which this emotional storm was triggered, its particular symptoms and remedies.

All five senses, but especially sight and hearing, were activated as a person contracted the emotional disease of *eros*.<sup>14</sup> It was Plato, in the dialogue *Cratylus*, who suggested the connection between that disease and the eyes: “Eros” is so called because it flows in from outside, that is to say, the flow does not belong to the person who has it, but is introduced into him through his eyes’.<sup>15</sup> A ritual of the gaze is imposed in order to organize the contacts between the sexes or, more generally, between unknown persons in the process of establishing a potential contact. It is no coincidence that the effects of love are often presented as identical to those caused by the evil eye; *eros* is just another form of *baskania* (jealousy), which ‘dissolves the bodies of lovers and leads them to their ruin’ (‘τοὺς ἐρῶντας ἐντήκει καὶ ἀπόλλυσι’).<sup>16</sup> The gaze becomes the central point of the body, the means by which a person provokes and experiences emotions in relation to the presence of another person. As Basil of Ancyra declared in the fourth century:



‘The movement full of curiosity of the eyelids is enough [...] to make us turn to desire’ (‘ικανὸν γὰρ καὶ βλεφάρων περιέργος κίνησις [...] παροιστρῆσαι πρὸς ἡδονήν’).<sup>17</sup> When, in *Digenis Akritis*, the young girl saw the hero for the first time, ‘her heart was enflamed; she did not wish to live in the world./ Pain was lit within her, as is right,/ for beauty wounds deeper than an arrow and penetrates the soul through the eyes themselves’ (‘ἐφλέχθη ἡ καρδίτσα της, οὐ θέλει ζῆν εἰς κόσμον./ Πόνος ἀνήφθη εἰς αὐτήν, ὡς τὸ δίκαιον ἔχει./ τὸ γὰρ κάλλος ὀξύτερον καὶ τοῦ βέλους τιτρώσκει/ καὶ δι’ αὐτῶν τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν εἰς ψυχὴν ἐπανήκει’).<sup>18</sup> What the gaze captivates is the beauty of the other, which then becomes ‘the father of *eros*’.<sup>19</sup> This beauty constitutes a concentration of not only the bodily but also the spiritual graces of the other person, since beauty is a mirror of the soul.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the eyes, another sense organ is responsible in the contraction of erotic passion, namely the ears. It is not only beauty and its passive contemplation that provokes love, but also the active utterance. Here erotic emotions are the result of a premeditated discursive strategy and the protagonist assumes the qualities of a rhetorician who incites the intended emotions in his listeners.<sup>21</sup> The erotic utterance that reaches the ear is ‘the combustible material of desire’ (‘ὑπέκαυμμα ἐπιθυμίας λόγος ἐρωτικός’).<sup>22</sup> The other senses accentuate the effects of passion, because *eros* is a holistic sensation that requires a unique devotion: ‘Eros enflames in this way those who are subjects to him,/ so that they spurn all else and proclaim him’ (‘οὕτως γὰρ φλέγει τοὺς αὐτῷ ὑπηκόους ὁ ἔρωσ,/ ὡς πάντων μὲν καταφρονεῖν, αὐτὸν δὲ προσαγγέλλειν’).<sup>23</sup> Once the passion has been contracted, the symptoms of the illness begin; the most important is the lack of modesty and loss of reason in girls and young men:

For the power of passion is desire and affection,  
and as for anyone who attempts to keep strictly to his proper role,  
desire overcomes him, though his mind be chaste.  
And because of this, he who desires has no sense of propriety,  
he is not ashamed before his kinsmen, he has no fear of his  
neighbors  
but is completely shameless and a slave to affection.

Δύναμις γὰρ τοῦ ἔρωτος πόθος καὶ ἡ φιλία,  
εἴπερ τὴν τάξιν ἀκριβῶς τηροῦντα τὴν ἰδίαν,  
σάφρονα νοῦν κατέχοντα, ὁ πόθος πολεμεῖ τον·

καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ ποθῶν εὐταξίαν οὐκ ἔχει,  
οὐ συγγενεῖς αἰσχύνονται, οὐ γείτονας πτοεῖται,  
ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὄλως ἀναιδής καὶ δοῦλος τῆς φιλίας.<sup>24</sup>

The only remedy and the only way to placate *eros* is the sexual act, which partially heals the passion and reorganizes the social life of the couple according to social conventions: 'Bed and night and kisses, embraces and a couch/ are balm to the souls of those tormented by love.' ('Εὐνή καὶ νύξ καὶ φίλημα, περιπλοκή καὶ κοίτη/ ψυχῶν θεραπευτήρια τοῖς ἐρωτοκεντήτοις').<sup>25</sup> In fact, an 'unhealed' and scorned *eros* can lead to uncontrollable disorders. The erotic charge can even lead to death, as almost happened to the emir, the father of Digenis, when he met his beloved after a long trip to his homeland.<sup>26</sup> Maximos Planoudes, the great philologist of the thirteenth to fourteenth century, presented the issue in a more sophisticated manner by commenting on a passage from the novel by Constantine Manasses:

Thus as long as Eros hopes to achieve his intention, he hovers round the beloved object and fawns on him; if he despairs, he summons Wrath as his fellow campaigner in murder and takes up arms for the attack. For Eros and Wrath are neighbours to each other [...] if Eros is slighted, he promptly summons Wrath to take vengeance.

Ἵτι Ἐρωσ ἐφ' ὅσον μὲν ἐλπίζει τεύξεσθαι τοῦ σκοποῦ, περιέπει καὶ σαίνει τὸ ἐραστόν· ἂν δ' ἀπογῆ, πρὸς φόνον τὸν θυμὸν ὡς συστρατιώτην παρακαλεῖ, καὶ πρὸς ἄμυναν ὀπλίζεται. Ἐρωσ γὰρ καὶ θυμὸς ἀλλήλοις εἰσὶ γείτονες [...] ἀτιμασθεῖς δ' Ἐρωσ, ὡς εἴρηται, τὸν θυμὸν μετακαλεῖται παραχρῆμα πρὸς ἄμυναν.<sup>27</sup>

The rejection of love provokes a series of counteremotions, the most important of which is anger, which is superimposed on every other emotion. Indeed, in ancient Greek and Byzantine thought, love and anger were sometimes seen as parallel and complementary mental states, since they were both thought to activate *thymos*, that is, mental impulses.<sup>28</sup>

In this novelistic logic that turns the emotional illness of love into the central question of the narrative, relations between the sexes are presented in a different light than in other narrative texts. If narrating an emotion means to embed an affective culture that can provide patterns of experience and action against which each individual measures his or her emotional behaviour, the novel is not intended to cause the

identification of the reader with its characters; it constructs, rather, an intentionally utopian discourse by creating a distance between the reality of the reader/listener and the narrated story. The protagonists do not express social expectations, but a dream situation where ingenuity and innocence entertain an audience far more intelligent and mischievous than the novelistic heroes and heroines.<sup>29</sup> No real man would probably have liked to resemble these completely innocent and passive heroes and no woman would have wanted to behave with the naivety of the heroines, other than as a strategy to ‘play the game of conformism’ according to the image that men had created for her. By comparing the two ingenuous protagonists, it appears that the image of girls is close to the Byzantine stereotype of gender roles,<sup>30</sup> whereas the male hero remains a completely imaginary construct.

The male heroes of the novel belong to an age group that is rather perplexing in the Byzantine context. The boys are not yet men and keep many elements of femininity that they reject only with their passage to maturity. Their undecided gender status is underscored by the fact that they share with the heroines the attribute of virginity and a joint emotivity (crying, feelings of shame, despair that leads to fainting and so on), considered by the authors—as we shall see—as feminine. The adventures make them mature and marriage turns them into men, but this happens at the end of the narrative. Throughout the story, the ingenuous hero amuses adult men by his inexperience, his feminine grace, his innocence and his immersion in the female world of expressed emotions. Is he perhaps, in the same way as the heroine, an object of desire and/or entertainment for the male readers? Adolescent boys, according to a literary tradition that goes back to antiquity, share with women the graces of a body untouched by masculinizing body hair. Or does he constitute a paradigm for a new ideal, promoted by authors weary of the militarization of twelfth-century society, underscored by the novels’ characterization of the male world in its most unpleasant expressions and represented by brigands, barbarians, fierce and ruthless fighters who act according to their own desires?<sup>31</sup> The latter seems as likely as the first, given the effort of authors of the time of Manuel I Komnenos to paint a graceful portrait of the ‘king of amours’ as a counterbalance to his portrayal as an effective and merciless soldier.<sup>32</sup>

To return to the question of the gendered category to which the emotions provoked by *eros* belong, it should be noted that in the novel, the adult world uses violence and experiences subsequent masculine

emotions (anger, rage, irrational outbursts, uncontrolled excitement of desire), whereas the boys who experience violence feel a series of emotions (pain, despair, sorrow) in their effort to manage it and thus manifest a social action considered to be feminine.<sup>33</sup> According to ancient science, summarized and popularized in the treatises on physiognomy that circulated throughout the Byzantine period, there is an emotional typology that is strongly gendered.<sup>34</sup> The fixed tables of the moral dispositions of men and women reveal emotions that constitute a fact of nature with stable characteristics and correspondences: a woman feels compassion ‘by nature’, she has a propensity for tears, she is jealous and easily loses her hope and she is basically shameless; the modesty she displays is not an emotion or a sensation, but a strategy to deceive men, even if she is, in truth, foolish and easy to dupe. In this picture, men have the opposite qualities in symmetrical analogy.

Throughout the ancient discussion, there is an implicit tension among emotion, reason, and will, between feeling (*aisthesis* in the sense of emotional sensitivity) and reason.<sup>35</sup> In Christian symbolism, following the ancient philosophers, *aisthesis* is a characteristic of women, whereas reason is the privilege of men: ‘pleasure, which is the snake, penetrates first the feeling (*aisthesis*), that we have defined as woman, then the feeling serves the intelligence, that we have defined as man’ (‘ἡ γὰρ ἡδονή, ἥτις ὁ ὄφις ἐστίν, πρότερον τῆ αἰσθήσει, ἢν γυναικὰ ἐλέγομεν, ἐγγίνεται, εἴθ’ οὕτως τῷ νῶ αὕτη διακονεῖ, ὅστις καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ εἶρηται’).<sup>36</sup> In this discursive logic, feeling does not operate as a complement to reason in order to restore the human unity sundered by the Fall, but is presented as opposed to reason by being its principal negative correspondent.

However, in this gendered logic of emotions, novelistic literature (the ancient and Byzantine novel along with some hagiography and historiography)<sup>37</sup> offers an interesting paradox: in novelistic discourse, men and women separate their emotions according to the age group to which they belong (adolescents or adults), transcending their ‘natural’ gender. The criteria that divide emotions are thus based on the division between age groups rather than that between men and women. Soldiers, pirates, barbarians, the personified god Eros, as well as the seductive and shameless women of the novel and of hagiography, function like torturers and are in some cases nurtured by the emotions of executioners, whereas the young boys and girls of the novels and the candid and devoted monks and nuns of hagiography suffer the fate of victims and are subject to emotions related to this status. In utopian stories, the only characters

that embody conventional values and manifest a clear division between men and women are the fathers and mothers, the paradigm that the young heroes are invited to embody after a period of emotional tension provoked by *eros*. The tension between adults and adolescents arises only with the entrance of the young heroes into the world of their parents and not into that of adults in general, composed as it is of barbarian men and masculine women—a world that exemplifies the threats of both sexual and social disorder.

The world of such anti-heroes becomes central in hagiographical and historiographical texts that declare themselves to be rational records of reality. The god Eros is replaced here either by magic or by Satan and his cohorts.<sup>38</sup> The emotions provoked are more threatening to the characters who endure them because they do not lead to the restructuring of the subject as in the novel, but to its destruction. Hagiography and historiography create and popularize exemplary stories in which magic and demons are the source of erotic emotivity, and they often represent two sides of the same coin: magic becomes the path that leads to demonic intervention. In the field of magic, *eros* has the same properties as those described in the novels: violent passion, bodily and spiritual illness, and heightened emotivity. *Eros* is perceived as an external force that violently seizes bodies and forces them to react against their will. The symptoms of magic are psychosomatic and include fury, internal burning and torture, forgetfulness, loss of modesty, vertigo and lack of appetite. Byzantine hagiographical and historical texts eloquently reveal these symptoms. Let us look at some of the most significant cases in order to consider the process of erotic seizure.

The first case, included in the *Life of Hilarion*—written by Jerome and translated into Greek by Sophronios—describes a nun who is the victim of a magic knot of desire prepared by a young apprentice magician, who is ‘madly in love’ (‘*ἔρασθεῖς ἀκολάστως*’) with her. The victim, immediately seized by a burning and destructive passion, begins to panic, to roll her eyes, to behave indecently in front of everyone, to throw off her veil, to untie her hair, to grind her teeth and to call out the name of the young man.<sup>39</sup> The consequences of desire, the emotions it provokes, are identical here with the symptoms of madness. A story of the same type is included in the *Life of Irene of Chrysobalanton*, which dates to the ninth century.<sup>40</sup> It is the story of a Cappadocian nun who had abandoned her fiancé to enter the convent. In order to win her back, he turns to a magician. The author then goes on to describe the symptomology

of the magical effects: a ‘fervour of the heart’ (‘ζέσις καρδίας’) filled the girl with furious desire (‘ἔρωσ μανικὸς καὶ ἐκφρενής’), cries, tears, disordered movements, hysteria attacks, suicidal tendencies—a vicious cycle of erotic emotions. In this case, magic explains the discomfort and hysteria of a young girl enclosed in the convent.

In historiography there are cases of more basic and less upsetting erotic magic, although with strong emotional consequences. Take, for example, the cases where the means used to provoke desire is an apple.<sup>41</sup> Ever since the Judgment of Paris, the apple has symbolized an erotic disposition and serves in magical ways.<sup>42</sup> In the thirteenth-century *History* of Niketas Choniates, the story of a certain Seth Skleros reveals the role of the magic apple (here in the form of a Persian apple, that is, a peach):

Skleros had passionately desired a nubile virgin and made a vigorous attempt on her honor but was rebuffed and held in contempt by the maiden. He then sent her a peach by way of a procuress. The virgin, concealing it in her bosom, was driven mad with passion and consumed by an insane lust, and, in the end, she was deflowered by him.

Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Σκληρὸς ἐπιγάμου παρθένου ἦρα καὶ ἐπεῖρα λαμπρῶς, παρορώμενος δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς κόρης καὶ ἀδοξοῦμενος στέλλει ταύτη διὰ προαγωγῆς τινος γυναιῶν μῆλον Περσικόν. ἢ δὲ παρθένος καταθεμένη τοῦτο τῷ κόλπῳ ἐκμαίνεται μάλα δὴ πρὸς ἔρωτα καὶ ἀφροδισίου ὑποπίμπλαται οἴστρου καὶ τέλος διακορεῖται παρ’ αὐτοῦ.<sup>43</sup>

The magic apple acts immediately and provokes the wanted result, an intense desire that leads the woman into the instigator’s arms. All the complexity of contrasting emotions experienced by the victim is contained in the evocation of madness and aphrodisiac frenzy (*oistros*). In the examples cited above, it is men who provoke emotional disorder, but there are also several cases where this role is given to women.<sup>44</sup> In fact, in the ‘realistic’ stories we find the same indecision as to who runs the erotic game as we did in the novelistic stories—the emotions obey not the male/female construction, but that of executioner/victim.

The same indecision about the gendered nature of emotions is present in texts that treat the topic of erotic jealousy (*zelotypia*).<sup>45</sup> For some authors, women and men are equally subject to jealousy<sup>46</sup>; for others, men are its main instigators, whereas yet for others jealousy concerns women almost exclusively. For John of Damascus, for example, jealousy is an innate characteristic of lovers, regardless of their gender: ‘The souls

of lovers feel jealousy, when they burn with vehemence. Jealousy could only be aroused by very strong desire' (‘ζηλότυποι γάρ εἰσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ σφόδρα τῶν ἐρωμένων περικαιόμεναι. Καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως τεχθῆ ἡ ζηλοτυπία εἰ μὴ ἀπὸ σφοδρᾶς φιλίας’).<sup>47</sup> In an anonymous twelfth-century text, it is men who ‘are carried away by jealousy with their entire soul and body for those they desire,/ even if their antagonists are black Ethiopians’ (‘ὄλαις ψυχᾶς καὶ σώμασι ζηλοῦσι τὰς ποθοῦσας/ κἂν μέλανες Αἰθίοπες οἱ ἀντερωῶντες ὧσιν’).<sup>48</sup> The novelists of the same century attribute jealousy rather to women, and Manasses even presents it as an exclusively female characteristic: ‘Jealousy is innate in women’ (‘σύμφυτα γάρ τοι γυναιξὶ τὰ τῆς ζηλοτυπίας’).<sup>49</sup> In historiographical texts, women are often the ones who allow jealousy to affect historical development, but at the same time, they are praised for being above jealousy.<sup>50</sup>

More than an attribute of women, however, erotic jealousy is an irrational emotion that characterizes barbarians and is considered as part of a disorder that does not suit civilized life. Hera, a goddess outside of the ordinary life of mortals, and Medea, a barbarous woman, exemplify the impact of jealousy in a woman’s life in ancient thought,<sup>51</sup> whereas barbaric men, such as the Persians, are subjected to its devastating effects in the same way.<sup>52</sup> An adaptation of Medea to a hagiographical context is to be found in the figure of the wife of the Goth in the *Miracle of Edessa*, who kills her husband’s child out of jealousy.<sup>53</sup> Rather than an emotion that characterized primarily one or the other sex, jealousy here became a strategy by which to talk about morality and to draw the outlines of a civilized eroticism, tamed and protected from the most dangerous emotional effects.

We have already pointed out that hagiography and historiography are marked primarily by a paradoxical *eros*—novelistic *eros*—which leads, however, to results contrary to those of the novel. It does not play an initiatory role that leads to affectionate love; instead, it is likely to simply destroy social bonds. Passionate love in realistic texts underscores the power of emotions over reason, of femininity over masculinity, of disorder over order. Even in more reserved accounts of intense love affairs, there is always a hint of disorder. For instance, the love of Zoe (1028–1050) for Michael IV (1034–1041), or that of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–1055) for Maria Skleraina, as presented in Michael Psellos’s *History*, as well as the erotic adventures of Manuel I (1143–1180) and Andronikos Komnenos (1183–1185) point to an anomaly in

the moral atmosphere of the court.<sup>54</sup> The youth of Manuel, for instance, as presented by Niketas Choniates, has nothing in common with the youth of a novelistic hero:

For Manuel, being young and passionate, was wholly devoted to a dissolute and voluptuous life and given over to banqueting and revelling; whatever the flower of youth suggested and his vulgar passions prompted, that he did. Indulging in sexual intercourse without restraint and copulating undetected with many female partners, he unlawfully penetrated his kinswoman.

νέος γὰρ ὦν ὁ Μανουὴλ καὶ ἐρωτικὸς τῷ τε ἀνειμένῳ βίῳ καὶ ταῖς τρυφαῖς προσανέκειτο καὶ συσσιτίων καὶ κώμων ἐξείχeto καὶ ὅσα τὸ νεότησιον ἄνθος ὑπέβαλλε καὶ ἐμύουν οἱ πάνδημοι ἔρωτες διεπράττετο. Καὶ πρὸς τὰς μίξεις ἀκάθεκτος ὦν καὶ πολλαῖς θηλυτέραις ἐπιθορνύμενος ἔλαθε καὶ δι' ὁμογνίου τρυμαλιᾶς ἀθεμίτως ἐμπερονών.<sup>55</sup>

What separates Manuel from the hero of the novel is what, according to the Byzantines, separates the 'reality' of youth (sexual awakening, moral recklessness) from its idealized fiction.

The more important empowerment of erotic love in Byzantine reality was the love that man should bring to God, but in this case the faithful man feminized himself towards the one and only Male—God. Theologians were a bit puzzled by this possibility. Some of them adopted the comforting Platonic division between earthly and heavenly love, whereas others dared to immerse themselves in total ambiguity and assimilate erotic experiences to amorous experiences with the Divine. The first path was well presented by Leontios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the twelfth century:

Desire (*pothos*) is a most fearful, violent and tyrannical feeling. It has fire and it attacks with vehemence. It is irresistible. With the fire that it emits, it takes possession of the soul that generates it and wants to burn it as soon as possible. But there is not just a unique desire; it has a double birth, in spite of the common name. There is the terrestrial desire without wings, that is why it rolls on earth and finds satisfaction in the mud like pigs; for to succumb to shameful pleasures and thus to relax gradually, what else is that than to roll in the dirt and the mud? This kind of desire contains only one good thing: it withers easily and it is fleeting. [...] The second kind of desire or *eros* is the celestial love that seems to have a multitude of fast



wings. It flies towards heaven, away from unhealthy odours, and it has an unquenchable and joyful fire. It becomes a flame thanks to the Holy Spirit, which is imperishable and eternal. [...] Where it flies, where it lives, where it operates. There are no perishable bodies, bathed in ephemeral beauty, but imperishable and virtuous souls, adorned with intelligible beauty.

Πόθος μὲν ἅπας, δεινὸς καὶ βίαιος καὶ τυραννικός· καὶ πῦρ ἔχει καὶ σφοδρὸς ὄρμη· καὶ ἔστιν ἀθάθεκτος τῷ παρ' αὐτοῦ πυρί, τὴν γεννώσαν περιλαμβάνων ψυχὴν καὶ ἐθέλων ὡς τάχιστα ἐμπιπρᾶν. Ὁ δὲ πόθος οὐκ ἔστι μονοειδής, ἀλλ' ἔχει διπλὸν μὲν τὸ γένος, ἐνὶ δὲ ὀνόματι καταγγέλλεται. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶ γήινός τε καὶ ἄπτερος καὶ διὰ τοῦτο περὶ γῆν ἰλυσπᾶται καὶ περὶ βόρβορον αὐτῷ καθάπερ τοῖς χοίροις ἢ τρυφή. Τὸ γὰρ αἰσχυραῖς ἡδοναῖς ἐνδιδόναι τινα καὶ ὑποχαλᾶν ἑαυτόν, τί γε ἄλλω ἢ βορβόρῳ καὶ πηλῷ ἐστὶν ἐγκυλίεσθαι; Τοῦτο μόνον ὁ τοιοῦτος πόθος ἔχει καλόν, τὸ εὐμάραντος εἶναι καὶ πρόσκαιρος [...] ὁ δὲ ἕτερος πόθος ἢ ἔρωσ ἔστιν οὐράνιος καὶ ἔοικεν εἶναι πολύπτερος τε καὶ ὠκύπτερος καὶ πρὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἵπταται καὶ δυσωδίας ἀπήλλακται καὶ ἄσβεστον ἔχει τὸ πῦρ καὶ μακάριον. Λαμπαδεύεται μὲν τοῦτο ἐκάστοτε τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ καὶ αἰώνιῳ, διὸ καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ πῦρ ἄσβεστόν ἐστι καὶ αἰώνιον. Ἐφ' ἃ δ' αὐτὸς περιίπταται καὶ οἷς ἐνδαιτᾶται καὶ ἐνεργάζεται, οὐ σώματα φθαρτὰ τῷ φαινομένῳ κάλλει περιλαμπόμενα, ἀλλὰ ψυχὰς ἀφθαρτοὶ καὶ ἐνάρετοι περιανθησμένοι τῇ νοητῇ ὠραιότητι.<sup>56</sup>

The second path, the one followed by enthusiastic and mystic monks and laymen of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the wake of Symeon the New Theologian amalgamated the two approaches and turned the experience of the relationship with God into a purely erotic one.<sup>57</sup> According to one of the forerunners of this movement:

There is nothing wrong in representing desire and fear and care and zeal and service and love for God in images borrowed from human life. Blessed is he who has obtained such love and yearning for God as an enraptured lover has for his beloved. [...] Blessed is he who has become as jealous of the virtues as husbands who remain in unsleeping watch over their wives out of jealousy.

Οὐδὲν τὸ δυσχερὲς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, καὶ πόθου καὶ φόβου καὶ σπουδῆς καὶ ζήλου καὶ δουλείας, καὶ ἔρωτος Θεοῦ παραθεῖναι εἰκόνας. Μακάριος ὅστις τοιοῦτον πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκτήσατο ἔρωτα, οἷον μανικὸς ἐραστής πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐρωμένην κέκτηται [...]. Μακάριος ὅς οὕτως ζηλωτὴς ἐν ἀρεταῖς γέγονεν, ὡς οἱ περὶ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ὁμοζύγους ἐκ ζήλου νήφοντες.<sup>58</sup>

Erotic emotivity thus becomes mystical emotivity, and Eros finds his complete rehabilitation in Byzantium only in a new utopia—that of the union of man with the Divine.<sup>59</sup> At a lower level and in the register of secular life, one may find the tenacity of this same idea. In this case, divine love is invited to heal the illness of passionate love, an idea to which the tenth-century John Geometres often returned:

The terrible *eros* blinds my mind;  
but the desire for you, my Christ, cools me down.

Ἔρωσ ὁ δεινὸς ἐκτυφλοῖ μου τὰε φρένας·/ ἀλλ' αἰθιριάζει σὸς  
πόθος με, Χριστέ μου.<sup>60</sup>

If you throw Bacchic fire on the fire, you seriously inflame it;  
but if you throw divine desire on the carnal, you put it out.

Εἰ πυρὶ πῦρ ἐπάγεις βρόμιον, μάλα πολλὰ ἀνάπτεις·/ εἰ δὲ πόθος  
σαρκὸς θεῖον, ἀποσβενύεις.<sup>61</sup>

However, the most perfect union between passionate love and spiritual love takes place within the frame of friendship—the sublime form of *eros* that unites two persons of the same sex, in this case two fervent young Christians. The ancient novel often incorporated homoerotic love into its plot<sup>62</sup>; in the Christian context it is hagiography that takes up the motif, but by changing its context and literary effects. The friendship of Symeon the Fool with John and the bond between Sergios and Bacchos have already been well studied.<sup>63</sup> Here we present an extreme case of male friendship which draws on the erotic vocabulary of the novel in order to describe the interaction between the natural and the mental, the corporeal and the spiritual, with an ambiguity that might surprise. This is the love that bound Gregentios, a young man visiting Italy, to a fourteen-year-old boy who was beautiful, according to the narrator, and was called Leo:

When some time had passed for them, their love multiplied like heavenly honey, their love increased like a worthy unguent that smelt more and more, their spiritual longing for each other burned like fire and their honour smelt virtuously like flowers, roses and lilies of the field. And when they had to separate from each other when they had fulfilled their spiritual liturgy, they moistened their worthy faces with tears, and standing there in good favour they looked upon each other, for they did not want to separate not even for a short time: Such was the love of the worthy boys.

And when they went home again and did not see each other, they were burned in their heart and their intestines were pricked terribly, and letting their tears flow like honey from their eyes, each of them called the name of the other in a most loving way and received consolation already by only mentioning the name of the desired one.

Χρόνου δὲ τίνος μεταξὺ αὐτῶν δεδραμηκότος, ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτῶν ὡς μέλι οὐράνιον ἐπλεόναζεν καὶ ἡ φιλία αὐτῶν ὡς μῦρον τίμιον ἐπὶ πλεῖον εὐωδιάζουσα ἐπηύξει καὶ ὁ πόθος αὐτῶν ὁ πνευματικὸς εἰς ἀλλήλους ὡς πῦρ ἐκαίετο καὶ ἡ τιμὴ αὐτῶν ὡς ἄνθη καὶ ρόδα καὶ κρίνα τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐναρέτως ἐμύριζεν [...]. Ὅποταν δὲ ἤθελον ἀποχωρισθῆναι ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν πληρωσάντων αὐτῶν τὴν πνευματικὴν λειτουργίαν, δάκρυσιν ἔβρεχον τὰ τίμια αὐτῶν πρόσωπα καὶ εὐμενῶς ἰστάμενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἐῶρων μὴ βουλόμενοι κἄν πρὸς βραχὺ χωρισθῆναι αὐτῶν· τοσαύτη ἦν ἡ ἀγάπη τῶν τιμίων παιδῶν. Ἐνδον δὲ πάλιν ἕκαστος αὐτῶν γινόμενοι καὶ μὴ ὀρῶντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν τῷ φίλτρῳ καιόμενοι δεινῶς ἐνύττοντο τὰ ἐνδόσθια, καὶ τὰ δάκρυα ὁμοίως ὡς μέλι τῶν ὀμμάτων κατεισφέροντες ἕκαστος τοῦ ἐτέρου τὸ ὄνομα φιλιτάτως ὀνομάζοντες ἐξ αὐτῆς καὶ μόνῃς τῆς προσηγορίας τοῦ περιποθήτου τὴν παραμυθίαν εἰσεκομίζοντο.<sup>64</sup>

As in most same-sex couples in the ancient novel, it is the separation that causes harm to this socially impossible, but spiritually praised love. A first separation, with Leo's move to his uncle, provokes 'unbearable sorrow and sighing':

For where there is abundance of love and plenty of friendship, and especially a spiritual one, there is also unbearable sorrow and sighing [...]. They embraced each other with a holy kiss and both rested for a considerable time at the neck of each other, let many tears run down, the one kissed the other's most beloved eyes with great fervour and sorrow, and having said to each other 'Farewell, brother, and remember me forever' they separated from each other.

ὅπου γὰρ ἀγάπης πλήθος καὶ φιλία πλεονάζουσα, εἰ καὶ μάλιστα πνευματικὴ, ἐκείσε λύπη ἀφόρητος καὶ στεναγμός [...] ἀσπασάμενοι ἀλλήλους ἐν ἀγίῳ φιλήματι καὶ ἐφ' ἱκανὴν ὥραν ἐπαναπαυσάμενοι ἕκαστος ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐτέρου αὐτοῦ τὸν τράχηλον καὶ ἔπειτα πολλοστὰ δάκρυα καταγαγόντες καὶ θάτερος θατέρου τὰ φίλτατα ὄμματα μετὰ πολλοῦ καύσωνος καὶ λύπης καταφιλήσαντες καὶ εἰρηκότες ἀλλήλοις 'Σῶζου, ἀδελφέ, καὶ μέμνησό μου διὰ παντός', ἐχωρίσθησαν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων.<sup>65</sup>

The second separation is final, caused by the death of Leo. Their love will find perfect fulfilment only in heaven. The spiritualization of passionate love keeps all the emotional baggage attributed to love intact. We find the same effort to spiritualize passionate love, but this time with considerable mastery of erotic emotions, in the theories of affectionate love in the context of the heterosexual couple. The spiritualization of love has thus won the battle on all fronts, leaving for the married—per definition adult—heroes an affective landscape dominated by controlled emotions.

### CONTROLLED EMOTIONS: THEORIES OF AFFECTIONATE LOVE

In order to find perceptions of a more reassuring kind of love between a man and a woman we must look for examples that move away from the grip of violent emotions and towards an emotional universe that is much calmer and controlled, sometimes hardly even perceptible. Such a version of love is to be found in the same category of texts, but then in cases where *eros*, erotic passion, must give way in the context of marriage to *agape*, affectionate love. Spouses must love each other, have a relationship marked by tenderness, and avoid erotic emotions in a setting where the respective roles of women and men are distinct and well separated. Accordingly, *eros* must be banished from the relationship between women and men in favour of a love that respects the hierarchy. Egalitarian love undermines marriage, so a kind of love that respects masculine and feminine ‘specificities’ must govern the mutual relations between women and men. These various emotions must be replaced by lasting feelings based on mutual respect. The man must respect his wife by recognizing her honour and value. He must adopt a paternal attitude towards her by showing the suitable emotions (pity, affection), by excusing her impulsiveness and her weaknesses, along with her disorderly emotivity, a product of inherent feminine weakness.<sup>66</sup> He is the undisputed leader of the family unit and he must magnanimously administer his benevolence and his control, which is ultimately just another form of his kindness, of his affectionate love for the weaker members of the family unit, since he is the social guarantor of its harmony.<sup>67</sup>

In texts that deal with marriage, the man establishes himself as a pole of reason and the woman as a pole of emotivity, so that their union ensures a complementarity based on hierarchy—a hierarchy that favours reason which, in turn, must control emotionality. Since the woman is

the best ‘subject’ under the man’s authority, ‘the subject who brings the most glory and honour to the power of a man’ (‘τὸ δὲ ἐνδοξότερον αὐτοῦ καὶ τιμιώτερον τῆς ἐξουσίας καὶ ἀρχῆς ἡ γυνὴ ἐστίν’),<sup>68</sup> she disposes, in turn, within the frame of marriage, of a power that generates affectionate love for the other members of the family, children and slaves. This notion of affectionate love, which insists on an emotional union between the parties involved, develops new frameworks for the relationship between men and women. In this perception of the relations between the sexes within the framework of marriage, *eros* and affectionate love can operate in an oppositional way: *eros* is limited and channelled to the purely sexual functions that ensure procreation, whereas *agape* is the legitimate expression of feelings that should govern marital relations.<sup>69</sup>

However, Byzantine literature does not exemplify this love, which was advocated by the preachers and theoreticians of Christianity. Exemplary couples in hagiographies and orations devoted to the mothers of the authors, such as those by Theodore the Studite and Michael Psellos, are portrayed under the aspects of devotion, respect, and the duty of procreation. A couple’s emotions are presented in three major specific cases,<sup>70</sup> where they overflow everywhere and transform ordinary people into novelistic heroes worthy of the narrative dedicated to them. The first case involves a violent separation. Ioannes Kaminiates, for example, who described the emotions experienced as families were separated by captivity during the siege of Thessaloniki in the tenth century, while insisting on the highly emotional speeches of fathers towards their children, is very reticent in recording a speech addressed by a husband to his wife:

Save yourself, wife, and do not forget your husband! Today is the powerful bond of mutual affection, which we forged in the intimacy of our shared existence, put asunder. The sword subverts the basis of our union. Untimely death dissolves our marriage.

Σώζου, γύναι, καὶ τοῦ συννόμου μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ. ἤδη γὰρ ἡ μεγάλη στοργή, ἣν πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐθέμεθα τῇ κοινωνίᾳ τῆς φύσεως, διακόπτεται σήμερον, καὶ ξίφος καινοτομεῖ τὴν συνάφειαν, καὶ θάνατος ἄωρος τὴν συζυγίαν δίστησιν.<sup>71</sup>

The second case involves hatred, especially women’s hatred for brutal or despicable husbands. Both hagiographical accounts and the

decisions of judges on divorce provide several examples of women who, in fact, identify with their marital hostility and express it in emotional outbursts.<sup>72</sup>

In the third case, a woman is frustrated by the fact that her husband has stopped loving her. Such a woman often has recourse to a magician in order to win back her husband's love, for instance, the disparaged woman in the *Life of Andrew the Fool*, whose behaviour leads to her own misfortune.<sup>73</sup> These actions border on novelistic discourse and thus rather form part of the register that we examined above. In contrast to such dramatic accounts, the emotions and feelings of real couples, representing the majority of Byzantines, belong to the realm of the ordinary and rarely attract the attention of authors, who seek to describe paradigmatic or exemplary cases, not the lives of ordinary people.

#### DE-EMOTIONALIZING EROS: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF LOVE AND THE THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE

‘There is a desire (*eros*) nestled in nature that leads to bodily contact without our knowledge [...]. Nothing can be as decisive a motivation as the desire of men and women’ (‘ἔνεστι γάρ τις ἔρωσ ἐμφωλεύων τῆ φύσει καὶ λαυθάνων ἡμᾶς συμπλέκει ταῦτα τὰ σώματα [...] οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως ἡμῶν συροτεῖ τὸν βίον, ὡς ἔρωσ ἀνδρὸς καὶ γυναικός’).<sup>74</sup> These words of John Chrysostom demonstrate a theological attitude that is more scientific than moral, an approach that is based on late antique philosophy and medical science. The biologization of desire is an attitude firmly rooted in the medical thought of antiquity.<sup>75</sup> What interests us here, however, is the Christian version of this notion and the efforts of several Byzantine scholars to bring a theological perspective to a discourse that was meant to be technical or scientific. In the writings of several theologians versed in medicine, eroticism is reduced to a mechanism of desire/pleasure, a discussion introduced into the vast social debate on the hygiene and regulation of sexuality. Here eroticism was no longer subject to a debate on the emotions that it triggered, but rather on the corporeal reactions that it provoked. If emotion is the synergy between soul and body and its manifestations are messages sent by the soul with the body as its intermediary, in this type of discourse, passion is an exclusively corporeal issue: *eros* is simply a mechanism of the human animal, programmed by God, so that it strives towards a specific goal:

[God] subjects the woman to the power of the man and tames the man by desire for the woman. He judged it just that woman, drawn from the side of man, should be subjected, as a part of the whole, to the power of the one from whom she was drawn. He made the man desire the part taken from him and thus, through the fusion, the man recovers his own part according to the needs of nature. [...] And not only did He inspire the carnal relations between them in the way I said, that is, through the voluptuous union of the bodies, but He procured for the human race, which is driven by the fire or desire, natural love for the continuation of the human race. [...] And so that the female does not remain unassisted, driven as she is by the natural love for procreation, God has made the drug of desire which leads the male to the female through a violent impulse to evacuate sperm. It is not the female who springs to the male, but the male who springs to the female like a prisoner of desire. [...] God gave this power to the weakest, the female, against the strongest, the man, and He made the feminine body and shape softer so that through the touch, the gaze, the movement and in general through the gentleness of all her members, the woman is bait for the desire that attacks by way of all the senses.

[ὁ Θεός] τῆ δυναστεία τοῦ ἄρρενος ὑποτάττει τὸ θῆλυ, τῆ δὲ τοῦ θήλεος ἡδονῆ τιθασσεύει τὸ ἄρρεν· τὸ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ ἄρρενος εἰλημμένον, ὡς ἂν μέρος ὄλω τῷ ἀφ' οὗ ἐλήφθη καταπειθὲς εἶναι πρὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν δικαιοσύνας· τὸ δὲ ἄρρεν ποθεῖν τὸ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ληφθὲν καὶ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸ διῶκον συμπλοκὴν εἰς ἑαυτό, διὰ τῆς μίξεως, τὸ οἰκεῖον μέλος ἀναλαμβάνειν ταῖς τῆς φύσεως ἀνάγκαις μηχανησάμενος [...] καὶ οὐ τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συμπλοκὴν μόνον, διὰ τῶν προειρημένων τρόπων, ἡδεῖαν τοῖς σώμασιν αὐτῶν ἐργασάμενος, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐκ τῆς συμπλοκῆς ταῖς τοῦ ἔρωτος λαμπάσι δαδουχούμενον γένος πολὺ τὸ φίλτρον ἐγκατασπίρας [...] καὶ ἵνα μὴ τῷ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ὁμοίου γένους διαδοχὴν φίλτρῳ τὸ θῆλυ ἀγόμενος, ὡς ἂν παθητικόν, ἀβοήθητον καταλείπεται ἡδονῆς ὄλον φάρμακον τῷ ἄρρενι τὸ θῆλυ κατασκευάσας βιαιοῖς ὀλκαῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν καταβολὴν τῆς γονῆς πρὸς αὐτὸ ἄγει τὸ ἄρρεν· οὐχὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄρρεν ἄγων τὸ θῆλυ, ἀλλὰ τῆ τοῦ θήλεος ἡδονῆ τὸ ἄρρεν πρὸς αὐτὸ αἰχμάλωτον ἄγων [...] ταύτην δὲ τὴν δυναστείαν κατὰ τοῦ κρατοῦντος τῷ τοῦ θήλεος μαλακωτέραν εἰργάσατο, ἵνα καὶ ἀφῆ καὶ βλέμματι καὶ κινήματι καὶ τῆ τῶν μελῶν συνόλῳ ἀβρότητι, καὶ ὀρῶν καὶ ὀρώμενον, μάλαγμα ἡδονῆς ἢ τῷ ἄρρενι, κατὰ πᾶσαν αἰσθήσεως προσβολὴν πανταχόθεν προσπίπτων.<sup>76</sup>

Basil of Ancyra, author of this fourth-century treatise on virginity, hastens to limit the irresistible character of sexual desire solely to the man and to distinguish it from a love that could have the characteristics of a feeling. According to his logic and based on a gendered distinction, love is divided into male love (*eros*), equivalent to desire, which is only an urgent

need to evacuate sperm, and female love (*filtron*), equivalent to a natural predilection for procreation. Desire is a gift from God to men, so that they can accept and support women; according to another theologian, Clement of Alexandria, desire is like salt in a dish, so that sexual relations will lead to procreation.<sup>77</sup> Women have no desire for carnal relations; they have only the natural urge (*filtron*) to become mothers and an innate weakness—a gentleness ordained by God to provoke male desire.<sup>78</sup> In this well-regulated universe, there is no room for any expression of emotions. Here one finds oneself facing the medical and theological topos of ‘the seductive woman’, who provokes the man sexually not out of some natural need, but as a mediated effort to usurp part of his masculinity.

John Philoponos in the sixth century spoke more explicitly about the existence of an irresistible natural force that unites a man to a woman, but it is a force subject to the ‘natural’ male superiority and female inferiority—‘natural’ in the sense that it is ordained by God. John did not specify whether this natural force is a form of attraction shared by men and women or a force felt by men that women must endure as passive beings.<sup>79</sup>

Based on Clement of Alexandria, mentioned above, in the twelfth century Michael Choniates explained human reproduction and sexual attraction between men and women by a difference in regard to hair:

[The divine and natural laws], wanting to give immortality through procreation to all kinds of perishable animals, have bound man and woman together with mysterious desires so that through their sexual relations, procreation advances and ensures birth. Desire would be rejected entirely by animals if sight did not reside in the eyes. Through the eyes, opening a path to desire and wanting to initiate sexual relations, nature has made the female softer and completely supple, so that the male, out of necessity harder, glorified by his action as active agent, is bewitched and softened by the smoothness of the flesh and the sweetness of the faces of the weaker. That is why not only women have faces without hair, but all female animals birds or quadrupeds have less and softer hair.

βουλόμενοι δι’ ἐπιγούνης τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστα τὰ εἶδη τῶν θνητῶν ζώων ἀθανατίζειν, ἄρρην καὶ θῆλυ δι’ ἄρρητων ἐρώτων συνέξευξαν, ὡς ἐκ τῆς συνδυαστικῆς ὀμιλίας τόκος προοδεύει καὶ σώζει τὴν γένεσιν. Ἐρωτες δ’ ἂν τὸ παράπαν ἐκ ζώων, εἰ μὴ τὸ ὄραν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπεκάρητο· δι’ ὧν εὐοδοῦσα ἡ φύσις τοῖς ἔρωσι καὶ τὰ γένη προαγαγεύουσα, ἐμάλθαξε τὸ θῆλυ καὶ πανάπαλον ἐφυράσατο, ὅπως τὸ τραχυθὲν ἀναγκαίως ἄρρην, ὡς δρῶν καὶ τοὺς ποιητικoὺς λόγους ἀρχοῦν, καταγοητεύοιτο πρὸς τοῦ πάσχοντος, τῷ ἀπαλῷ τῶν σαρκῶν καὶ τῷ λείψ τῶν προσώπων ἐκμειλισσόμενον.<sup>80</sup>



In this treatise on the physiology of desire, there is, however, a small opening for passionate love, considered as an emotional illness related to madness, as Michael spoke of the bewitchment of men by women. It should be noted that Michael wrote at a time when the novel had just been ‘revived’, perhaps as a sort of theological reaction to the exaltation of erotic passion. Later, in the fourteenth century, we find the same ideas in a philosophical and literary context, again raising the question of eroticism with the familiarization of Platonic ideas and the reappearance of erotic narratives—now in the form of romance.<sup>81</sup> In all these texts, where ‘Eros confounds social expectations and medical expertise’,<sup>82</sup> there is an effort towards an epistemological rehabilitation of *eros* through the process of its de-emotionalization.

### CONCLUSIONS

This survey of various texts, written at different stages of the Byzantine period, has revealed both the ambiguity that marked Byzantine thought on erotic love and the many discursive logics that materialized in specific narratives: from flaming desire, caught in a sea of strong and contradictory emotions, constructing or deconstructing the subjectivity of the character according to the narrative circumstances, to love provoked by a surplus of sperm that needs to be released in order to ensure the character’s well-being in the deafening absence of emotions. Between fictional love and scientific love, ‘realities’ that belong in books, there is a middle ground, inhabited not by literary characters but by real people—the Byzantines of flesh and blood, whose loves remained surprisingly and disappointingly hidden. But the emotional grammar of love and desire that they performed can be partially reconstructed by means of careful readings and scholarly imagination.

### NOTES

1. For anthropological and historical approaches to emotions, see David Le Breton, *Les passions ordinaires: anthropologie des émotions* (Paris: Payot, 2004<sup>3</sup>); Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey M. White, ‘The Anthropology of Emotions’, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 15 (1986): 405–36; William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Barbara H. Rosenwein, ‘Histoire de l’émotion: methods et approches’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 49 (2006): 33–48.

2. See, e.g. Michel Bozon, *Sociologie de la sexualité* (Paris: Nathan, 2002).
3. Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy, 'Une histoire des émotions incarnées', *Médiévales* 61 (2011): 5–24, here 12: 'construire une histoire des émotions c'est en effet étudier les conceptions et usages du registre affectif dans un corpus en le lisant à l'aune des normes et pratiques d'écriture des sources'.
4. Cf., e.g. David Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) (on love, see 169–84); Angelos Chaniotis et al., *Unveiling Emotions: Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012).
5. On love in Byzantium in general, see Hans-Georg Beck, *Byzantinisches Erotikon* (Munich: Beck, 1986); Carolina Cupane, 'Byzantinisches Erotikon: Ansichten und Einsichten', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987): 213–33; P. Odorico, 'L'amour à Byzance', *Europe* 822 (1997): 34–46.
6. Erotic love in the ancient novel has generated an impressive bibliography; here we limit ourselves to some central works: David Konstan, *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Simon Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Helen Morales, 'The History of Sexuality', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*, ed. Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 39–55. On the various medical theories of sexuality, see Giulia Sissa, 'Phusis and Sensuality: Knowing the Body in Greek Erotic Culture', in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*, ed. Thomas K. Hubbard (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014): 265–81. On the Byzantine novels in general, see Roderick Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996<sup>2</sup>); for a recent update, see Ingela Nilsson, 'Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise: The Byzantine Revival of the Twelfth Century', in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 39–66. On love in the Byzantine novels, see Beaton, *Medieval Greek Romance*, 57–59; Carolina Cupane, 'Eros Basileus. La figura di Eros nel romanzo bizantino d'amore', in *Atti della Reale Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo*, ser. 4, bd. 33 (1973/1974), 243–97; eadem, 'Metamorphosen des Eros. Liebesdarstellung und Liebesdiskurs in der byzantinischen Literatur der Komnenenzeit', in *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposiums an der Freien Universität Berlin, 3. bis 6. April 1998*, ed. Panagiotis A. Agapitos and Diether R. Reinsch, Meletemata 8 (Frankfurt am Main: Beerenverlag, 2000),

- 25–54. On sexuality in the novels (and the late Byzantine romance), see also Hans-Georg Beck, ‘Ortodossia ed erotismo. Marginalia alla letteratura erotica bizantina’, in *Il romanzo tra cultura latina e cultura bizantina*, ed. Hans-Georg Beck, Fabrizio Conca, and Carolina Cupane (Palermo: Enchiridion, 1986), 13–32; Lynda Garland, “‘Be Amorous but be Chaste...’: Sexual Morality in Byzantine Learned and Vernacular Romances’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 14 (1990): 62–120; Ole L. Smith, ‘Sexuality and Sexual Morality in Byzantine Romance’, in idem, *The Byzantine Achilleid: The Naples Version* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 183–94. For hagiography, see Virginia Burrus, *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Alexander Kazhdan, ‘Byzantine Hagiography and Sex in the Fifth to Twelfth Centuries’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 131–43; Ingela Nilsson, ‘Desire and God Have Always Been Around, in Life and Romance Alike’, in *Plotting with Eros: Essays on the Poetics of Love and the Erotics of Reading*, ed. Ingela Nilsson (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2009), 235–60. For historiography, the bibliography is very limited, but see, e.g. Diether Reinsch, ‘*Historia ancilla litterarum?* Zum literarischen Geschmack in der Komnenenzeit: Das Beispiel der *Synopsis Chronike* des Konstantinos Manasses’, in *Pour une ‘nouvelle’ histoire de la littérature byzantine*, ed. Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis A. Agapitos, *Dossiers Byzantins* 1 (Paris: De Boccard), 81–94, and idem, ‘Die Macht der Rede in der Chronographia des Michael Psellos’, in *L’écriture de la mémoire: La littérarité de l’historiographie*, ed. Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis Agapitos, and Martin Hinterberger, *Dossiers Byzantins* 6 (Paris: De Boccard, 2006), 253–66; Emmanuel Bourbouhakis, ‘Exchanging the Devices of Ares for the Delights of the Eros: Erotic Misadventures and the *History* of Niketas Choniates’, in *Plotting with Eros*, 213–34.
7. In fact, Byzantine historians, with the exception of Prokopios (in *Anecdota*), Michael Psellos, Constantine Manasses, Niketas Choniates and Nikephoros Gregoras, avoid treating erotic themes in detail.
  8. Cf. S. Lalanne, *Une éducation grecque. Rites de passage et construction des genres dans le roman grec ancien* (Paris: Éditions la découverte, 2006).
  9. Michael Psellos, *De omnifaria*, ed. Leendert G. Westerink, *M. Pselli De omnifaria doctrina* (Nijmegen, 1948), no 109.5–6. In cases where no translator is mentioned (such as this), translations from Greek are our own.
  10. On the world of embodied emotions in the Byzantine novel, see Corinne Jouanno, ‘Discourse of the Body in Prodrornos, Eugenianos and Macrembolites’, in *Der Roman im Byzanz*, 81–93, here 81.

11. *Digenis Akritis* G, 4.4–11 and 18. Ed. and trans. (cited here and in the following), Elisabeth Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis: The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Among the Byzantine novels, *Digenis Akritis*, version G (14th c.) reproduces most faithfully the ancient topology on the pathology of desire, both on the meeting between *eros* and emotion and on the codified grammar that is established between emotion and corporeal reaction. Yet, Digenis is the character most distant from the heroes of the ancient and Byzantine novels, and scholarship does not really agree on its generic belonging. In either case, the editor of G constructs, parallel to the story of Digenis, a fabric of references that comment on the nature and manifestations of desire—this text thus constitutes a sort of anthology of Byzantine thought on erotic typology. On love in *Digenis Akritis*, see Corinne Jouanno, *Digénis Akritas, le héros des frontières: Une épopée byzantine* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 140–56.
12. Anonymous, *Erotic poem*, ed. Maria Petta, ‘Άγνωστο βυζαντινό ερωτικό ποιήμα του 12οῦ αιώνα’, in *Origini della letteratura neogreca*, ed. Nikolaos Panayotakis, 2 vols. (Venice: Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia, 1993), 2, 77–88, vv. 62 and 118, also I. Polemis, ‘Κριτικές και ερμηνευτικές παρατηρήσεις σε βυζαντινά και μεταβυζαντινά ποιήματα’, *Hellenika* 44 (1994): 357–67, vv. 42 and 154. See also Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, ed. Miroslav Marcovich, *Theodoros Prodromus, Rhodanthe et Dosicles* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1992), 2.191 and 195.
13. See, e.g. Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, ed. Fabrizio Conca, *Nicetas Eugenianus, De Drosillae et Chariclis amoribus* (Amsterdam, 1990), 2.66 and 220, 4.300 etc.
14. On the sense of touch and its significance in Byzantine literature, including the twelfth-century novel, see Ingela Nilsson, ‘To Touch or not to Touch: Erotic Tactility in Byzantine literature’, in *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*, ed. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Margaret Mullett (Washington, DC: Harvard University Press, 2017), 239–57; on *eros* as an illness, see 252.
15. Plato, *Cratylus*, 420a–b; trans. C. D. C. Reeve, *Plato: Cratylus* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1998), 63.
16. Psellos, *De omnifaria*, no 109, p. 60; on the terms and the meaning of *baskania*, see Martin Hinterberger, *Phthonos: Mißgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur*, Beiträge zur Erforschung griechischer Texte 29 (Wiesbaden: Serta Graeca, 2013), 28–35.
17. Basil of Ancyra, *On Virginity*, in *PG* 30, 696B and 740C; see also Antony, *Melissa*, in *PG* 136, 816D; Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, 2.121–123; *Erotic Poem*, v. 1: ‘ἔξ ὀφθαλμῶν εἰς ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰπέ πῶς ῥέεις, ἔρωσ’.

18. *Digenis Akritis* G, 4.274–77. On the gaze in the ancient novel of Achilles Tatius, an important model for such depictions in both *Digenis Akritis* and the twelfth-century novels, see Helen Morales, *Vision and Narrative in Achilles Tatius' Leucippe and Clitophon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
19. John Katrares, *Hermodotos*, ed. Anton Elter, *Hermodotus et Musocles dialogi* (Bonn, 1898), 16.430.
20. On beauty and its challenges in Byzantium, see Myrto Hatzaki, *Beauty and the Male Body in Byzantium: Perceptions and Representations in Art and Text* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and eadem, 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Maldon, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 93–107.
21. David Konstan, 'Rhetoric and Emotion', in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. Ian Worthington (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 411–25.
22. Antony, *Melissa*, PG 136, 813A; citation from Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 1.5.6. See also Basil of Ancyra, PG 30, 693C and 700C. For a concrete example of this cooperation between the gaze and the ear, see *Syntipas*, ed. François Boissonade, *De Syntipa et Cyri filio Andreopuli narratio* (Paris, 1828), 107.
23. *Digenis Akritis* G, 3.81–82.
24. *Digenis Akritis* G, 4.525–30. See also 4.341–48.
25. Manasses, *Aristandros and Kallithea*, fr. 111. ed. Otto Mazal, *Der Roman des Konstantinos Manasses* (Vienna: Wiener Byzantinische Studien, vol. IV, 1967); trans. Elisabeth Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 316. See also Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, 6.377–78; 7.235–37.
26. *Digenis Akritis* G, 3.279–86.
27. Commentary by Planoudes on the novel by Manasses, fr. 96a; trans. Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 312–13. See also *Digenis Akritis* G, 2.203, citing Heliodoros, *Ethiopian Story*, 8.6.
28. On the perceptions of anger in antiquity, see William V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Konstan, *The Emotions*, 41–76. The issue has not been treated yet in any detail in Byzantium. A couple of approaches can be found in the article of Andriani Georgiou in this volume and Stavroula Constantinou, 'Angry Warriors in the Byzantine War of Troy', in *Emotions Through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Douglas L. Cairns et al., forthcoming.
29. According to Corinne Jouanno, 'Les jeunes filles dans le roman byzantin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Les personnages du roman grec*, ed. Bernard Pouderon (Lyon, 2001), 329–46, here 342, the production of these novels consists of 'une stratégie de compensation, consistant à exalter, sur le mode

- imaginaire, des modèles traditionnels de répartition des rôles sexuels, en un temps où se modifient de façon appréciable les rapports entre les “genres”.
30. See, e.g. Corinne Jouanno, ‘Women in Byzantine Novels of the Twelfth Century: An Interplay between Norm and Fantasy’, in *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience 800–1200*, ed. Lynda Garland (London: Publications for the Centre for Hellenic Studies, 2006), 141–62.
  31. Garland, ‘Be Amorous’, 78.
  32. Paul Magdalino, ‘Eros the King and the King of Amours: Some Observations on *Hysmine and Hysminias*’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 197–204. See also Christina Christophoratu, ‘Figuring Eros in Byzantine Fiction: Iconographic Transformation and Political Evolution’, *Medieval Encounters* 17 (2011): 321–53. It should be noted, however, that what becomes an instance of eulogy for some authors, namely the emperor as a lover, is an opportunity for criticism for another. In Niketas Choniates, for instance, there is a tension that structures the narrative and announces the coming disaster in the portraits marked by the military images and erotic activities of the last Komnenians, Manuel and Andronikos—always in favour of the latter; see Bourbouhakis, ‘Exchanging the Devices’, 224.
  33. For tears, see, e.g. Prodomos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 1.149–50: ‘ἄφες τὸ πευθεῖν καὶ τὸ μακρὰ δακρῦειν./θηλυπρεπὲς γὰρ ἡ ροὴ τῶν δακρῶν’; cf. also 6.445 and Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, 9.220–27 on the innate predilection of women for tears. On tears in Byzantium, see Henry Maguire, ‘The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), 123–74; Evelyn Patlagean, ‘Pleurer à Byzance’, in *La souffrance au Moyen Âge* (Varsovie, 1988), 251–61; Paolo Odorico, ‘Les larmes à Byzance: de la littérature au fait social’, in *Lachrymae. Mito e metafora del pianto nel Medioevo*, ed. Francesco Mosetti Casaretto (Alessandria: Ricerche Intermedievali, 2011): 43–61; Martin Hinterberger, ‘Tränen in der Byzantinischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Emotionen’, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006): 27–51. On laughing and crying in twelfth-century novels, see Ingela Nilsson, ‘Comforting Tears and Suggestive Smiles: To Laugh and Cry in the Komnenian Novel’, in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Late Antiquity, Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Margaret Alexiou and Douglas Cairns (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 291–311.
  34. See, e.g. Aristotle, *History of Animals*, 608a 21–608b. For other texts, see Maguire, ‘The Depiction’.
  35. This tension draws on Plato, who attributed emotions to an irrational and greedy soul.

36. Didymus the Blind, *On Genesis*, I, ed. Pierre Nautin and Louis Doutreleau, *Didyme l'Aveugle Sur la Genèse I-II*, SC 233, 234 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1976), 222.19–21.
37. On hagiography in particular, see Charis Messis, 'Fiction and/or Novelization in Byzantine Hagiography', in *A Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. II: *Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Farnham Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014): 313–42.
38. On erotic magic in antiquity, see John J. Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 71–98; Christopher Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); John Petropoulos, 'The Erotic Magical Papyri', in *Proceedings of the XVIIIth International Congress of Papyrology*, I, ed. Basileios Mandilaras (Athens: Greek Papyrological Society, 1988), 215–22.
39. *Vie d'Hilarion*, in Antonios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ανάλεκτα Ιεροσολυμιτικής Αγιολογίας*, v. V (St. Petersburg, 1897), 82–136, here ch. 21.98–99.
40. Jan Olof Rosenquist, (ed.) *The Life of St. Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* I (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1986), 52–64. On this episode of the *Life*, see also Dorothy Abrahamse, 'Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982): 3–17, here 13–14; Alexander Kazhdan, 'Holy and Unholy Miracle Workers', in *Byzantine Magic*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995): 73–82, here 78–79.
41. The word apple (μήλον) indicates, in fact, an entire category of fruits. On the erotic symbolism of apple, see Antony Littlewood, 'The Symbolism of the Apple in Greek and Roman Literature', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 72 (1967): 147–81; idem, 'The Symbolism of the Apple in Byzantine Literature', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 23 (1974): 33–59; idem, 'The Erotic Symbolism of the Apple in Late Byzantine and Meta-Byzantine Demotic Literature', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 17 (1993): 83–103.
42. On the Judgment of Paris in Byzantine literature, see Littlewood, 'The Symbolism of the Apple in Byzantine Literature', 41–46; Elisabeth Jeffreys, 'The Judgement of Paris in Later Byzantine Literature', *Byzantion* 48 (1978): 112–31. For an example of the motif in a novelistic context, see Niketas Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles* 2.284–87, who was probably influenced by the ancient novel of Longus.
43. Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. Ioannes Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae, Historia* (Berlin and New York: CFHB XI, 1972): 148.86–90; trans. H. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*



- (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 84. On this episode, see Kazhdan, 'Holy and Unholy', 81.
44. Cf., e.g. the magician in the *Life of Basil the Younger*, ed. Denis F. Sullivan, Alice-Mary Talbot, and Stamatina McGrath, *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 45 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2014), ch. 51–54.
  45. On erotic jealousy in ancient Greece and Byzantium, see Konstan, *The Emotions*, 226–32; Martin Hinterberger, 'Zelotypia und Phthonos: Eifersucht in der Byzantinischen Literatur', *Nea Rhome* 6 (2009): 11–36; on the terminology, see also idem, *Phthonos*, 42–44.
  46. Photios, *Lexicon*, ed. S. Nader (Leipzig, 1864–1865), z 53: 'ζηλοτυπία: ζηλος ἐξ ὑπονοίας τοῦ ἄρρενος κατὰ τῆς οἰκειάς γυναικὸς εἰς ἕτερον ἀσελγῆ ὑπόνοιον'; Suda, ed. Adler, z 58; *Passion of Néreas and Achilles*, ed. H. Achelis, *Acta SS. Nerei et Achillei, Texte und Untersuchungen* XI. 2 (1893): 1–23, p. 2.25–26: 'ζηλοτυπῶν γὰρ αὐτὴν ὁ πατὴρ μου ἐπὶ πλείστους χρόνους ὕβρεσιν αὐτὴν ἐξέθλιβεν'.
  47. John of Damascus, *Com. In Epist. Ad. Corinth.* II, in *PG* 95, 757: 'ζηλότυποι γὰρ εἰσὶν αἱ ψυχαὶ σφόδρα τῶν ἐρωμένων περικαίόμεναι'. Cf. Basil of Caesarea, *Homily on Fasting*, in *PG* 31, 173.39–42 and John of Damascus in *Sacra Parallela*, in *PG* 96, 196.
  48. *Erotic Poem*, 155–56 (Petta). Polemis in his edition has 'ὄλαις ψυχαῖς καὶ σώμασι ζηλοῦσι τὰς ποθοῦσας / καὶ μεταπλάττουσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰς ἐκείνων γνώμας / κἄν μέλανες Αἰθίοπες οἱ ἀντερῶντες ὧσιν / εἰς ὄδραργύρου λεῦκασιν ὀρμῶσιν αὐτομάτως' (149–52).
  49. Manasses, *Aristandros and Kallithea*, fr. 114. See also Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, 5.5.7; Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, 5.52–53: 'οὐκ ἄγνωθόν δέ, δεινὸς ὦν πρὸς τὸν πόθον/ὡς ζηλότυπον χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφω; *Digenis Akritis* G, 5.210–12: 'and then for the first time I discovered that a woman's love is much more intense than that of men'. On jealousy in the novel, see Hinterberger, 'Zelotypia', 29–34.
  50. See, e.g. Empress Theodora, whose jealousy caused by the presence of Amalasantha provoked the war between the Byzantines and the Goths (Prokopios, *Anecdota*, 16.1) and cf. the case of Theophano, wife of Leo VI, who had to accept the marriage of her husband with the daughter of the logothete Zaoutzas: John Skylitzes, *History*, ed. Ioannes Thurn, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, *CFHB* 5 (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1973), 172.90–93.
  51. On Hera and Medea, see Konstan, *The Emotions*, 228–31.
  52. See, e.g. the Persians in Plutarch, *Life of Themistocles*, 26.4–5.
  53. Hinterberger, 'Zelotypia', 26–29; Charis Messis and Stratis Papaioannou, 'Histoires gothiques: le *Miracle* de l'Euphemie et du Goth (BHG 739) et le voyage transversal des sujets littéraires dans la production écrite à Byzance', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 67 (2013): 15–47.



54. See, e.g. Ioannis Polemis, 'Michael Psellos the Novelist: Some Notes on the Story of the Empress Zoe', in *Myriobiblos: Essays in Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sophia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki (Boston and Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 285–93; on the emotional world of Psellos and his ideas on genre and eroticism, see Stratis Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), ch. 6.
55. Choniates, *History*, 54; trans. Magoulias, 32; see Bourbouhakis, 'Exchanging the Devices', 220–21.
56. Leontios of Jerusalem, 'On Desire', in *Μακαρίου Χρυσοκεφάλου Λόγοι Πανηγυρικοί ΙΔ* (Kosmopolis/Vienna, 1793), 439–40. See also Katrarios, *Hermodotos*, 1030–34.
57. On the mystics of Symeon in general, see Hilarion Alfeyev, *St Symeon the New Theologian and Orthodox Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
58. John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, in PG 88, 1156BC. See also John Chryssavgis, 'The Notion of "Divine Eros" in the Ladder of St. John Climacus', *St. Vladimir Theological Quarterly* 29 (1985): 191–200.
59. On this 'grammar of desire' in Byzantine Christian literature, see Averil Cameron, 'Desire in Byzantium—the Ought and the Is', in *Desire and Denial in Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 205–13. See also Nilsson, 'Desire and God'; Niki Tsironis, 'Desire, Longing and Fear in the Narrative of Middle-Byzantine Homiletics', in *Papers Presented at the Fifteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 2007*, ed. Jane Baun et al., *Studia Patristica* 44 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 515–20.
60. Maria Tomadaki, *Ιωάννης Γεωμέτρης: Ιαμβικά Ποιήματα* (Thessaloniki: Diss. 2014), 228.
61. Emilie M. von Opstall, *Jean Géomètre. Poèmes en hexamètres et en distiques élégiaques* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 227.
62. Cf. John F. Makowski, 'Greek Love in the Greek Novel', in *A Companion to the Ancient Novel*, ed. Edmund P. Cueva and Shannon N. Byrne (Malden, MA: Wiley: 2014), 490–501.
63. Claudia Rapp, *Brother-Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium: Monks, Laymen, and Christian Ritual* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 157–61; Stavroula Constantinou, 'The Gift of Friendship: Beneficial and Poisonous Friendships in the Byzantine Greek Passion of Sergius and Bacchus', in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2011), 201–30.
64. Albrecht Berger (ed. and trans.) *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2006), 3.260–75.

65. *Ibid.*, 3.318–22.
66. Theodoret of Cyrus, *Therapeutic*, ed. Pierre Canivet, *Théodoret de Cyr, Thérapeutique des maladies helléniques*, SC 57 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000<sup>2</sup>), IX, 58.
67. On power relations in couples, see Charis Messis, ‘Mariage et rapports entre les sexes à Byzance: aspects généraux’, in *Byzantine Culture. Papers from the Conference Byzantine Days of Istanbul*, May 21–23, 2010, ed. Dean Sakel (Ankara, 2014), 453–63.
68. Photios, *Letters*, ed. Basileios Laourdas and Leenhardt Westerink, *Photii patriarchae Constantinopolitani Epistulae et Amphilochia*, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1983–1988), letter 210.30–31 (v. II, 110).
69. Cf. the perceptions of love and desire within the frame of the novel; above and Nilsson, ‘Desire and God’.
70. For more forms of conjugal love in hagiography, see Andreou in this volume.
71. John Kaminiates, *Capture of Thessalonike*, ed. Gertrud Böhlig, *Ioannis Caminiatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, CFHB 4 (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1973), ch. 36.1–3; trans. David Fredo and Athanasios Fotiou, *John Kaminiates: The Capture of Thessaloniki*, Byzantina Australiensia 12 (Perth: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2000), 65. See also Neville, in this volume.
72. For some examples, see Charis Messis and Antony Kaldellis, ‘Conjugal Violence and the Ideological Construction of the Byzantine Household’, *Limes Plus: Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities* 13.2 (2016): 21–40.
73. For an analysis of this episode, see Christina Angelidi, ‘The Dreams of a Woman: An Episode from the *Life of Andrew the Fool*’, in *Myriobiblos*, 25–38.
74. Chrysostom, in *PG* 62, 135–36.
75. Aline Rousselle, *Porneia, de la maîtrise du corps à la privation sensorielle, II<sup>e</sup>-IV<sup>e</sup> siècles de l'ère chrétienne* (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 1983).
76. Basil of Ancyra, *On Virginity*, in *PG* 30, 673–76.
77. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, ed. Otto Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus Stromata. Books I–VI*, GCS 15 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1985<sup>2</sup>), II, 20, 118, 177.
78. See also Soranos, *Gynaecology*, ed. Paul Bourgière, Danielle Gourevitch, and Yves Malinas, *Soranos d'Éphèse, Maladies des femmes* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1990), I, IX, 34.
79. Philoponos, *De opificio*, ed. Gualterus Reichardt, *Johannis Philoponi De opificio mundi libri VII* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1897), 272.5–14.
80. Michael Choniates, *Encomium of St Niketas of Chonai*, ed. Spyridon Lambros, *Μιχαὴλ Ἀκομινάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ σωζόμενα* (Athens, 1879), vol. I, 43.7–17, based on *Pedaegogus* II, IV, 41, 3.

81. Katrarios, *Hermodotos*, v. 473–78: ‘[God] ἔμφυτον τὸ κάλλος ἠργάσατο καὶ τούτου φιλίας καὶ κοινωνίας ἀλλήλοις ἔρωτα συνεκέρασεν· ἔπειτα [...] καὶ βίου καὶ γενέσεως παίδων κοινωνίαν κεφάλαιον εἶναι γάμου ὑπέδειξεν.’ On the late Byzantine romance, see Cupane and Krönung, *Fictional Storytelling*, esp. the contributions by Carolina Cupane, ‘In the Realm of Eros: The Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance—Original Texts’, 95–126; Kostas Yavis, ‘The Adaptations of Western Sources by Byzantine Vernacular Romances’, 127–55.
82. Winkler, *The Constraints*, 84.



## ‘Weaver of Tales’: The Veroli Box and the Power of Eros in Byzantium

*Diliana Angelova*

In this chapter, I look at the emotion of love (*eros*) as construed through images on a middle Byzantine container known as the Veroli casket or, as favoured here, the Veroli box.<sup>1</sup> I base my conclusions in part on new interpretations of both the images and the iconographic program,<sup>2</sup> and argue that the pagan Eros and classical myths reigned supreme in the Byzantine social imaginary about love.<sup>3</sup> Their potency was ensured by the dearth of Christian exempla of passionate love, the enchantment of the classical artistic and literary tradition, especially in articulating erotic feelings, the centuries-old traditions surrounding wedding gifts, and the habit of allegory. Although there were artistic experiments with biblical subjects, such as Adam and Eve, medieval Byzantium did not succeed in creating a viable Christian alternative to the classical discourse of erotic love and its visual and literary conventions. The Veroli box offers exquisite testimony to the enduring relevance of pagan gods and figures in Byzantine amatory art and the literature both in the expression of erotic feelings and in their gendering. Immortal goddesses and ravishing mortal women exemplified attractiveness and loveliness in women,

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gods and heroes did the same for men, while liaisons of heroes and gods served as paradigms of love stories, happy-ending, ‘bitter-sweet’, or ‘limb-loosing’.<sup>4</sup>

### THE QUESTIONS

The Veroli box, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, is the outstanding example of a large number of boxes decorated with carved ivory and bone panels pinned to a wooden core and decorated with images depicting Greco-Roman myths (Fig. 8.1).<sup>5</sup> The latest museum catalogue dates it to the second half of the tenth century. The box is rectangular in shape, has a sliding lid, and measures 40.5 cm in length, 11.5 cm in height, and 15.5 cm in width, and it weighs 1.72 kg. The lid depicts the abduction of Europa by Zeus in the shape of a bull, a group of stone throwers taking aim at Europa, three playful Erotes, centaurs making music, and three human dancers shaking their bodies with abandon (Figs. 8.2, 8.3, and 8.4). The shorter, lock, side shows two Erotes, one seated on an altar with a coiled snake and another riding a seahorse (hippocamp; Fig. 8.5). On the opposite short side, Dionysos is



**Fig. 8.1** The Veroli box/casket, view from the side, Constantinople, late tenth century–early eleventh century, walnut wood overlaid with carved ivory and bone plaques with traces of polychrome and gilding, height: 11.5 cm, length: 40.3 cm, width: 15.5–16 cm, weight: 1.72 kg. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)



**Fig. 8.2** Europa Abducted by a Bull-shaped Zeus, Eros, Musicians, and Dancers, lid of the Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)



**Fig. 8.3** Europa's Abduction, detail, lid of the Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)

**Fig. 8.4** Centaurs Playing Music and Dancers, detail, lid of the Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)



lounging on a cart drawn by two lions (Fig. 8.6). The longer sides feature identifiable mythological figures and stories. The two panels on one of the long sides include images of Bellerophon and his winged horse, Pegasus, and the sacrifice of Iphigenia (Fig. 8.7). The other long side





**Fig. 8.5** Erotes in a Seascape, lock short side, Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)

depicts Erotes playing with wild animals (a lioness, a lion, a hound, and a stag) and the god Ares cupping the chin of Aphrodite (Figs. 8.8 and 8.9).

Boxes of this type make up the largest category of secular art objects produced in middle Byzantium. There are more than a hundred such intact Byzantine boxes and fragments, dating from 900s to 1200s, a period conventionally referred to as the middle Byzantine era.<sup>6</sup>



**Fig. 8.6** Dionysos and Eros-in-a-cup, short side, Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)



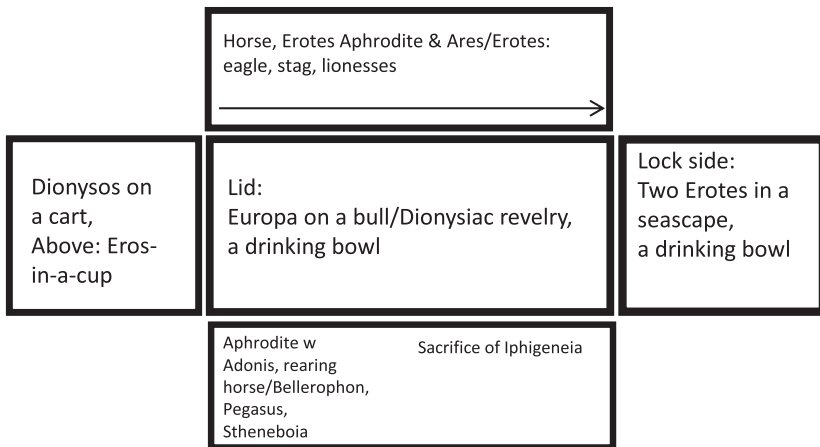
**Fig. 8.7** Aphrodite and Adonis, Bellerophon with Stheneboia/The Sacrifice of Iphigeneia, long side, Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)

In the broader context of Byzantine artistic production, these objects present a puzzling counterpart to mainstream artistic production. The arts of Byzantium privilege Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Christian saints. Christian images in Byzantine culture were icons, integral to devotional practices and conduits to the Divine, and, as such, project





**Fig. 8.8** Eros Playing with Animals, Aphrodite with a Torch, and Ares, long side, Veroli box. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)



**Fig. 8.9** Schematic presentation of the images on the Veroli box (© Author)

solemnity and dignity. In contrast, Byzantine ivory and bone boxes are pagan and often playful. Many depict recognisable gods, but especially Eros, the god of love, and his companions, Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and Dionysos, the god of wine and merrymaking. With some modifications, these middle Byzantine images of pagan gods and their pursuits follow a venerable iconographic tradition, the Greco-Roman (classical) artistic idiom, thought to have been mostly replaced by Christian imagery during the early Byzantine period.

So too the Veroli box. One of the major puzzles for the art historians interpreting the Veroli box has been the difficulty of reconciling its classical subjects with its medieval date. In the middle Byzantine period, classical mythological scenes seem enough out of place in the context of an overwhelmingly Christian culture to require a special explanation. The second puzzling aspect of the imagery has to do with its iconography. Is it solemn (there is a sacrifice)? Should we laugh at it (Erotes playing silly games)? Are we watching tragedy, comedy, or a low-brow farce? What else might be involved? There are no easy answers.

Although most of the scenes are easily recognisable, they do not entirely conform to the ancient visual idiom. Some are positively topsy-turvy. The Erotes, though inhabiting the bodies of chubby toddlers, have the faces of adult men. Stone throwers take aim at Europa and her divine kidnapper. That scene of violence is juxtaposed with one of celebrations. Asklepios, the healing deity, and Hygeia, the goddess of Health, witness the sacrifice of Iphigeneia (Figs. 8.2 and 8.7). Solemn sacrifice mingles with a scene of fellatio (note the Eros in Fig. 8.8). Why?

How one should read these images, many of which are obviously meant to stir emotions, is tied up with the way the Byzantines interpreted the legacy of the classical past, by that time, a period centuries removed from their own realities. A further challenge for the modern viewer is how to avoid presentism, reading the images by taking what seems apparent at face value; to assume that the observations described above are what they seem to be: joining of meaningless quotations from ancient art or making fun of the classical canon.

In what follows, I address the principal approaches in the scholarship on interpreting the imagery on the Veroli box and their relationship to the classical tradition. I then offer my own iconographic analysis, which demonstrates the relevance of these unusual images to understanding love in Byzantium.

### EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP

Scholars have addressed the iconographic and semantic conundrums of the Veroli box and related middle Byzantine objects in three main ways: manuscript transmission, production methods, and Byzantine realia. Kurt Weitzmann pioneered the first approach. He consistently argued that Greco-Roman mythology and images on Byzantine ivory and bone caskets derived from illuminated manuscripts, such as no longer extant

illustrated codices of Euripides's tragedies, pseudo-Oppian's *Cynegetica* (on hunting with dogs), and pseudo-Nonnos's commentaries on the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, Weitzmann attributed the departures from classical iconography to these borrowings from another medium, assuming that meaning was inevitably lost or changed in the transmission.<sup>8</sup> Europa's abduction shown on the Veroli box thus came from illustrations of bucolic poetry, the *Sacrifice of Iphigeneia* from an illuminated codex with Euripides's tragedies, the cycle of Dionysos from various mythographers, and so on. Weitzmann postulated 'a single large-scale' transmission that gradually led to mistakes and loss of meaning,<sup>9</sup> so his reconstruction insisted on a fundamental incoherence in the box's iconographic program.

Weitzmann's take on the images on the Veroli box depended on the prevalent notions concerning the artistic legacy of antiquity in Byzantium. The dominant thesis, first advanced by Nikodim Kondakov and then forcefully espoused by Weitzmann, conceived of the classical legacy in Byzantium as returning in bursts, in so-called renaissances, literary revivals of antiquity, the first of which was the Macedonian Renaissance.<sup>10</sup> For Weitzmann, the Macedonian revival of classical art was tightly connected to now-lost manuscripts of the classical literature. The views of revival and its ties to literature thus informed Weitzmann's ideas of a single transmission and copies.

The logic of artistic renaissances in Byzantium had been challenged.<sup>11</sup> In a seminal article on the cup of San Marco, Ioli Kalavrezou argued that antiquity continued to inspire Byzantine artists, though they 'medievalised' the classical iconography, especially with respect to gestures.<sup>12</sup> Although mythological figures are represented, and even sometimes can be identified, the choice to render them was visual rather than 'thematic'.<sup>13</sup>

Building on Weitzmann's ideas of copies and transmission of imagery through manuscripts, Erika Simon suggests that the Veroli box copied illuminations from a lost manuscript of the *Dionysiaca* by Nonnos of Panopolis (fl. early 400s).<sup>14</sup> However, she considers the Veroli images indebted to the *Dionysiaca*'s order of narration as well as to its major themes.<sup>15</sup> Her solution to the puzzle of the stone throwers, a scene from the *Gigantomachy*, the epic battle between the gods and the giants, relies on the proximity of the depiction of this myth to the one of Europa.<sup>16</sup> Together with postulating a literal correspondence between the text and the arrangement of the images, Simon argues that Nonnos's text

informed the iconography on a deeper level. She identifies two principal themes: astral symbolism and the power of Eros. In her view, departures of the images from their ancient prototypes should be attributed partly to Christian understandings of sin and punishment.<sup>17</sup> Thus, she sees something coherent and affirms that the Veroli imagery was chosen selectively to create an overall program related to the container's purpose as a wedding present.<sup>18</sup>

Not everyone agreed with Weitzmann's theory of copies or with Simon's overall conclusions that the Byzantine images on classical subjects were meaningful or even with the claim that the boxes' prototypes should be sought in classical art. Hans Belting and Anthony Cutler have argued for late antique inspirations.<sup>19</sup> Cutler further challenges Weitzmann's focus on illuminations and texts by drawing attention to what seemed completely ignored: the objects themselves. He insists that any investigation of the largest category of Byzantine secular art objects should begin with materials, technique, and style.<sup>20</sup> He rejects not only the notion of copying from manuscripts, but also the idea that the imagery on the Byzantine boxes conveyed enduring meanings, was considered precious by the boxes' owners, or were even used for specific purposes.<sup>21</sup> Rather than the elevated realms of tragedy, Cutler contends that the middle Byzantine 'classical' representations were akin to 'farce' or, at best, were 'flotsam' with a 'flavour of antiquity'.<sup>22</sup> Cutler's reasoning depends in part on two images on the Veroli box. In the putto with exposed buttocks he saw a comic double of Europa (Fig. 8.8), whereas he recognised the stone throwers as a Byzantine invention (Fig. 8.2).<sup>23</sup> His ideas about meaning are tightly linked to his view of materials and production methods and the notion of the decline and irrelevance of classical culture. He considers the boxes 'mass produced' cheaply made objects of bone (a commonly available material) that were assembled in a 'fairly random way'.<sup>24</sup> Overall, he regards classical culture as belonging to the elite and, therefore, implicitly, irrelevant.<sup>25</sup> The randomness idea is likewise embraced by Paul Speck, who has suggested that the boxes cobbled together late antique materials.<sup>26</sup> This interpretation has drawn an intriguing challenge by Gudrun Bühl, whose study of the arrangement of rosette strips has built a strong case for understanding each box as having been planned individually rather than having been put together in a haphazard fashion.<sup>27</sup> Thus, her conclusion points to potential coherence of meaning in each individual box.

The third, more recent approach in the relevant scholarship has attributed the differences between ancient iconography and Byzantine renditions of classical scenes to intrusions from contemporary life. Anthousa Papaïannaki finds echoes of Byzantine realities in the rendering of musical instruments.<sup>28</sup> Henry Maguire has considered the influence of grylloi, performers who regaled audiences with buffoonery, horseplay, and scatological humour to induce laughter.<sup>29</sup> Echoes of grylloi's performances can be seen in the conical hats worn by some figures on the boxes (two are depicted on the Veroli lid), the naked bottoms of others, and the motif known as the *Chastisement of Eros*, where the boy Eros appears head first in a basket (Figs. 8.6 and 8.8).<sup>30</sup> In evaluating the impact of grylloi, Maguire sides with Cutler: the pagan imagery on middle Byzantine boxes mocked antiquity, thus allowing the Christian viewers to distance themselves from it and indulge in it at the same time.<sup>31</sup> Paroma Chatterjee explains the 'danger' as well as the 'benefits' of pagan imagery purely from the formal perspective of an intrigued viewer who is imagined tracing the twists and turns of bodies around the box.<sup>32</sup> For Alicia Walker, the tug and pull of laughter affords the opportunity to process ideas about female sexual allure, both with and against prevailing Byzantine social mores.<sup>33</sup>

### A NEW ANALYSIS

The present study differs from most previous analyses in that I argue that the pagan imagery on the box was rendered in conscious continuity of the classical artistic tradition.<sup>34</sup> Byzantine artists did not perceive that tradition as alien, nor did they mock it, reject it, or otherwise misunderstand it. On the contrary, they were aware of classical iconography and continued to work within its idiom for a specific class of objects: the nuptial chest. The novelty the Byzantine artists introduced tweaked rather than transformed the core messages of that tradition and did so in order to express the transformative emotions of passion and love, for which Christian exempla were lacking.

This argument follows in part from a revised identification of some of the images on the Veroli box, the internal organisation of the imagery, its meaning, and its relationship to ancient art. The analysis starts with the lid and proceeds with each of its sides. I highlight relationships between images that follow ancient conventions in visual grammar, semantics, and intended function. Comparison between the Veroli images and

contemporary boxes leads me to conclude that the individual figures on the box can be conceived of as eloquent units that might be arranged differently on individual boxes, but that these arrangements were not necessarily random or meaningless. As is the case with ancient art, contemporary viewers would have understood the whole from its parts, provided that the images conveyed enough information.<sup>35</sup> I suggest that the individual units on the Veroli box and related objects connect thematically.

The idea animating the connection comes from the Byzantine imaginary about erotic unions, especially in the context of weddings. As was the case in antiquity, the Byzantines deployed gods and mythological figures to express ideas of beauty and sexual appeal, attraction and repulsion, danger and erotic fulfilment. Rather than real individuals, Eros and his mother, Aphrodite, Dionysos and his entourage, and an army of Erotes (putti, Loves, cupids) embodied situations, feelings, and abstractions related to the power of love. They did so in gender-specific ways, which dictated that stunningly beautiful yet innocent females were caught off-guard by the desire they elicited in powerful and handsome men, who in turn were transformed in longing for them.

The pagan deities found on Byzantine boxes were understood as beings endowed with particular specific powers (beauty, elegance, might); they also conjured meaning allegorically through their association with particular stories.<sup>36</sup> This way of understanding classical art was no different from how the pagan gods and their feats were interpreted before Constantine (r. 306–337) and the Christianisation of the Roman Empire. I have already written on the mechanism and the gendering of such associations as communicated on late antique textiles and personal objects.<sup>37</sup> Briefly, male mythological characters such as Achilles or Dionysos exemplified qualities considered essential to ideal masculinity and female mythological heroines or goddesses helped define ideals of femininity, whereas mythological couples helped construe emotions such as passion, sorrow, and happiness. Herein, I argue that the Byzantine understanding of classical imagery followed the ancient themes with modifications, as can be reconstructed through comparisons with ancient art and literature (epithalamia and novels in particular).<sup>38</sup> The alterations suggest that the Byzantines considered parts of the classical tradition as their own, and as such they not only cherished it but also modified it to fit their contemporary understandings and ideas.<sup>39</sup>

The pagan images chosen for the Veroli box were carefully selected to portray love as a powerful emotion, one that could subdue the most powerful of deities, tame the fiercest of beasts, torment, mock, and annihilate or alternatively spread bliss. Each side of the box dwells on the aspects of being in love, on love's outcomes, both positive and negative, and on love's troublesome transformations. Although the dangers of Eros's awesome power are recognised, the message of the Veroli box remains positive. The nuptial undertones of the imagery on the Veroli chest suggests that the object was a wedding gift, one that likely came into the household with the bride's trousseau and may have contained precious jewellery, part of the bride's dowry.

### PREMISES

Arguing for this reading of the imagery, in both my insistence that it throws light on how the Byzantines conceived of *eros* and on their conceptualisation of gender roles of people in love, rests on a particular engagement with the images that has to be clarified at the outset. Fundamental to my analysis is the observation that the formal elements of the program, combined with its exquisite craftsmanship, press for a coherent message. Where others have seen chaos, I assume lack of understanding on the part of the modern observer, rather than of the Byzantine one.

I make my case for the programmatic coherence of imagery that has traditionally been considered obsolete and forgotten by insisting on the presence of the classical tradition as part of the urban fabric of Constantinople and other cities.<sup>40</sup> Helen Saradi-Mendelovici has convincingly demonstrated that ancient statuary was indeed preserved and cherished.<sup>41</sup> However, preservation, as I argue here, need not be understood as motivated only by aesthetic, patriotic, or other such reasons that disregard meaning.<sup>42</sup> The tendency to underscore the fabulous, aberrant, or ignorant attitudes has led to questioning the endurance of classical meanings and regarding the classical artistic tradition as discontinuous with the Byzantine era.

I make my case for artistic continuity in part by observing that the iconographic types found on the Byzantine boxes came from a stock of images that are too well known to attribute their origin to specific lost illuminations. It must be remembered that before 1204, the city of

Constantinople was a veritable museum of ancient art. The city's founder, Constantine, initiated the collection of ancient statuary in the capital by stripping other cities and sanctuaries of their centuries-old monuments.<sup>43</sup> Despite Eusebios of Caesarea's claims to the contrary, monuments and statuary with pagan inspiration and subject matter continued to grace the city's public squares throughout Constantine's reign and for a long time afterwards.<sup>44</sup> Owing to the knights of the Fourth Crusade, only a small fraction of that collection is extant. Some of the city's treasured antiquities were deliberately destroyed and some were used to furnish bullion. A number of bronze statues, many centuries old, were melted down for coins. In evaluating the loss, Niketas Choniates famously remarked: 'Thus great things were exchanged for small ones, those works fashioned at high expense were converted into worthless copper coins'.<sup>45</sup>

In my view, the ancient statuary's ghostly presence, now largely reconstructed through glimpses in the textual sources, provided a constant source of inspiration to Byzantine artists.<sup>46</sup> The few surviving fragments allow for the construction of deep genealogies of transmission. Consider one example that illuminates the loss with respect to motifs found on the Veroli box. The Archaeological Museum in Istanbul displays a statuary group of the *Gigantomachy*. The group dates to the third quarter of the 100s. Carved out of black-grey and silvery-white Proconnesian marble, it includes a figure that could be seen as a source for the Veroli box: a Luna *velificans* (with a billowing veil; Fig. 8.10).<sup>47</sup> The Luna with the veil correlates closely with Europa in terms of that attribute and her dress. Figures holding wind-swept veils were common in ancient art, and it can be assumed that Constantinople possessed more than one statue or images in other media showing billowing veils. Byzantine examples of *velificantes* are found on fifth- to sixth-century textiles, middle Byzantine ivory carvings, manuscript illuminations, and the fourteenth-century mosaics in the Chora monastery.<sup>48</sup> Thus illuminated manuscripts need not carry the burden of artistic transmission. The Byzantines continued to cherish the classical artistic tradition for at least three reasons: elements of that tradition adorned the city's capital, classical literature continued to imbue it with relevance, and, as I argue, it played an important role in the Byzantine social imagery concerning *eros*.

The second plank of my argument about continuity rests on how the images on the Veroli box conceptualise *eros*. They do so capaciously.



**Fig. 8.10** Luna velificans (with a billowing veil), marble sculpture from Silah tarađa (Constantinople), second century, height: 150 cm. Istanbul Archaeological Museum, acc. no. 5064 (© Author)



Love brings joy as well as sorrow; it induces great transformations and passions<sup>49</sup>; it is synonymous with the sexual act and marriage, but in some respects it remains a mystery. The Veroli program images these aspects of *eros* through the meaningful deployment of classical mythological figures. This reading of the middle Byzantine classical art is congruent with the fate of the classical literary tradition, which was preserved, understood, studied, and thus further advanced.<sup>50</sup> The proof that the classical artistic tradition lived on rests with the very elements that contemporary scholars considered alien: the changes the medieval artists introduced to it. These transformations were acts of knowing hands that carved recognisable Europa, Dionysos, Ares, Apollo, and Aphrodite, but somewhat modulated their original iconography and with it manipulated their meaning.

### THE LID AND THE TWO SHORT SIDES

The case for coherence of meaning and therefore an understanding of *eros* in a classical sense emerges from the formal order the Veroli artist imposed on the iconographic program. Both the grammar and meaning of ancient art animate the imagery. In what follows, I demonstrate how the composition, iconography, and import of individual scenes and their relationship to the surrounding portrayals create a formal unity via a theme, itself discernible in the myths and figures chosen for representation. The flexibility with which individual scenes and characters change places in boxes with similar iconography helps foster the conclusion that the ivory carvers understood the individual myths and figures as interchangeable signifiers that communicated a coherent idea.

To an observer with no training in ancient art, the most obvious sign of order is the framework of rosette bands that encircle the images, as if weaving them into a tapestry. The carver visually identified the lid as the most important part of the box by choosing a more elaborate frame around the central panel, which is conceived as a mini-tableau. The decorative pattern of the frame alternates medallions featuring a head in profile, reminiscent of ancient coins, and an exquisitely carved eight-petal rosette, each showing traces of gilding and forming a delicate ivory lace.<sup>51</sup> The rosette bands framing the rest of the panels are finely done, but are far simpler,<sup>52</sup> repeating a pattern of an eight-petal rosette inscribed in a circle. The different designs of the frames are thus important in that they highlight the scenes on the lid and bind the

images together, outlining a principal subject (Europa and celebration) and secondary ones (the rest of the images). Another outstanding feature of the images is the posse of Erotes, which likewise connects scenes and guides the viewer as to how to read the images. There are more than twenty cupids represented on the box.<sup>53</sup> Together with the rose-based frames, the Erotes set the theme of the images as a meditation on love, roses being the flower of Aphrodite, and Erotes the goddess's habitual companions.<sup>54</sup>

The scene thus set, the viewer's attention turns to the mythological couples that are 'roped' with garlands of roses. A viewer armed with knowledge of the classical tradition can easily identify famous lovers: Zeus and Europa and Aphrodite and Ares. Zeus's passion for the beautiful Europa led to her abduction, 'marriage' to the father of the gods, and children.<sup>55</sup> Aphrodite and Ares, depicted on one of the long sides, had an affair while Aphrodite was married to Hephaistos (Fig. 8.8). Three more couples are represented on the other long side (Fig. 8.7). There is some disagreement as to the identity of the first two couples (more on this below), but in both instances we have a woman and a man interacting with one another as the centre of the composition.<sup>56</sup> The leftmost woman embraces the nude man standing next to her; the woman talking to Bellerophon is likely the spurned lover Stheneboia.<sup>57</sup> The last panel shows the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, yet even here the emphasis is on lovers: the doomed maiden is embraced from the back, possibly by Achilles, her promised spouse.<sup>58</sup>

A sixth couple can be made out in the connection between the revelry and the figure of Dionysos shown on one of the short sides. The god of wine is reclining on a cart drawn by two big cats.<sup>59</sup> Shown alone, this iconography could suggest the god's triumphal return from India,<sup>60</sup> but the outstanding elements of his procession are missing. Instead, an Eros, head and body plunged in a cup with his naked bottom and chubby legs sticking out, hovers above the yoked panthers. In ancient art, the feline-driven god often shares his vehicle with the beautiful Ariadne, the Cretan princess whom the unfaithful Theseus abandoned on Naxos, only to be found and married happily to Dionysos. The image of Dionysos and Ariadne together in a cart is commonly found on Roman sarcophagi. A second-century relief that originally belonged to a Roman tomb shows a procession led by musicians and dancers, Maenads and Satyrs; a Satyr carrying a long torch; Pan pulling the reins of two lionesses that draw the cart with the lovers, and a winged Eros riding on one of the felines

and playing a lyre (Fig. 8.11).<sup>61</sup> Ariadne's absence from Dionysos's cart and the substitution of other characters with an *Eros-in-a-cup* motif beg for an explanation.

Simon sees in it the metaphor of 'drunk with love'.<sup>62</sup> The same motif is also depicted on the panel with Aphrodite and Ares (Fig. 8.8), just around the corner from Dionysos.<sup>63</sup> These visual connections must be understood as deliberate and related with respect to meaning. The wine god is shown alone, suggestive of triumphs, yet the *Eros-in-a-cup* motif imbues the scene with longing. The god pines for his missing companion. The viewer apprehends the import of the scene as Dionysos 'drunk with love' for Ariadne. Dionysos's passion for Ariadne is thus compared to Zeus's for Europa. The short side links to the rest of the imagery.

Though uniquely assembled, the imagery on the Veroli box can thus be described as deliberate in its program and connected to Eros and famous mythological lovers. The practice of representing mythological lovers from different stories within the same object has precedents in Roman wall paintings and late antique textiles as well as ivories.<sup>64</sup> One example, a plastron from a tunic in the Louvre, shows Aphrodite and Adonis, Herakles and one of his lovers, and Narcissus with the nymph Echo.



**Fig. 8.11** Dionysos and Ariadne Processing, marble relief on a closure slab from the Via Appia (Rome), second half of the second century, height: 74.5 cm, width: 205 cm. Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, acc. no. SK 850 (© Stephanie Pearson)

The function of mythological couples was to associate the wearer of the tunic with the positive qualities of the represented figures in their pairings: desire-inducing beauty and passion.<sup>65</sup>

To disentangle the roles of the couples shown on the Veroli box, we need more clarity regarding other seemingly iconographic errors. Dionysos is removed from the revelry on the lid, where he naturally belongs. A similar narrative disconnect can be perceived on the short side that is adjacent to the Europa myth (Figs. 8.1 and 8.9), which features naked-bottomed putti in a seascape: one putto is sitting on an altar with a coiling snake and the other is reclining on a hippocamp (Fig. 8.5). What was the logic that led to including such scenes on this box? These artistic decisions must be explained if one is to argue for a unified iconographic program, especially one based on the classical artistic idiom.

The Veroli artist had a particular way of arranging the scenes. Great care was lavished on the sliding lid. The artist used that feature of the design to show off his/her craft by deliberately creating a longer frieze from two pieces to span the whole length of the lid (Fig. 8.1). The frieze has two compositional centres and joins two separate scenes: the first one closes on Europa and the other expands outwards from the two dancers with conical hats. The dancing duo's outstretched arms are strong diagonals that imbue the scene with energy. On Europa's left, two companions gesticulate in desperation at her abduction, whereas on the maiden's right a group of angry-looking men are preparing to hurl stones at her (Figs. 8.2 and 8.3). The myth of Europa is visually stitched to an image of celebration through three Eroles (Fig. 8.4). The two hovering in the air are stretching their arms in a way that resembles ligatures, connecting Europa to a revelry. Three dancers lift their arms apparently in time with the music, kicking their legs to the accompaniment of a mixed ensemble of musicians: a human lyre player, a centaur on a flute, and another hoofed centaur with the pan pipes. Such linkages between individual scenes can also be seen on a stylistically similar ivory panel from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Fig. 8.12; hereafter V&A panel), where the myth of Europa is juxtaposed with an image of Aphrodite and Ares.<sup>66</sup> Why link the abduction of Europa, here deliberately rendered with violence, with an image of feasting? Why join the same myth, minus the violent intruders, with Aphrodite and Ares on the V&A panel?

The roses, Eroles, and the mythological figures point to the realm of amorous encounters. But to grasp the reason for the connection, one must correctly identify the revelry on the lid. As one of two most visible



**Fig. 8.12** Europa Abducted by Zeus and Aphrodite and Ares, box panel, carved elephant ivory, Byzantine (Constantinople), 10th or early 11th century, height: 5 cm, length: 13 cm, depth: 0.9 cm, weight: 0.06 kg. London, V&A Museum, acc. no. 216-1865 (© Victoria and Albert Museum)

scenes on the lid, it provides crucial information about the whole meaning. The dancers and musicians shown to the right are similar to those belonging to a Dionysiac thiasos, although the figures are rendered quite differently from ancient prototypes.<sup>67</sup> In ancient art, sylphic Maenads, their long dresses swaying and their shawls billowing, lead the procession in quick yet graceful movements. In some images, they keep the beat with cymbals (Fig. 8.11); in others they hold the pine-topped thyrsus. Though nimble, the Veroli dancers are stocky, chubby-cheeked, and bedecked with conical hats. Maguire sees grylloi conflated with Maenads in these dancers.<sup>68</sup> Simon compares their lusty kicks to contemporary Greek dancing and makes a case for identifying them and the plethora of similar round-bellied and heavy-bottomed figures as Eroses.<sup>69</sup> She points to a miniature from a manuscript of the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnos that shows a figure similar to the third dancer in the composition, only shown frontally, and labelled 'Eros'.<sup>70</sup> Further relying on Nonnos, Simon interprets the scene as the wedding of Europa's brother, Kadmos, with Harmonia, who according to some ancient authors was the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite.<sup>71</sup>

There are no figures on the box that can be identified as either Kadmos or Harmonia. However, the individual elements in the iconography of the revelry closely follow scenes of Dionysiac processions, especially as rendered on Roman sarcophagi. Like sarcophagi, the box

features an energetic dance, centaurs, music-making, Erotes, and a drinking vessel. It also borrows particular iconographic details. For instance, on one second-century sarcophagus, a centaur, a winged Eros hopping on his back, holds a lyre and a plectrum as he processes.<sup>72</sup> The centaur figure is reminiscent of the Veroli lid centaur with the Eros straddling his shoulders. The Veroli image of celebration does not appear funny or irreverent, but it can be considered as a Byzantine rendering of the world of Dionysos. As Maenads change places with Erotes, it appears that the latter have assumed the function of Dionysos's followers and celebrants of his cult. Or more broadly, the image indicates a shift in meaning from Dionysos to Eros.

These observations, then, suggest that what scholars have taken to be mistakes in copying may in fact be Byzantine contributions to the classical tradition. The images on the Veroli box need not have been copies of texts, nor were they randomly assembled in the artist's workshop. They were joined deliberately for a specific purpose. To glean that objective, we have to take cues from the images and from the tradition to which they belong.

At first blush, Europa's abduction and Erotes in a seascape on the opposite shorter side of the Veroli box may appear disconnected. Although the lid shows the kidnapping of Europa as unfolding on land, in ancient art that myth is commonly set in the sea, and occasionally joins a marine thiasos.<sup>73</sup> The mythological world of the sea conforms to ancient descriptions of Europa's story, such as Moschus of Syracuse's poem *Europa* (mid-second-century BCE). In the poem, the briny waters become the banquet hall for celebrating Europa's nuptials, while marine denizens, Nereids, Poseidon, and Tritons, become her wedding guests. The revellers make their own music with Tritons playing nuptial tunes on their shells.<sup>74</sup> Testimony that the Byzantine makers of ivory boxes knew of that sea context comes from the V&A plaque (Fig. 8.12). It, too, shows the Europa story, except that the stone throwers are omitted and the undulating waves of the sea rather than dry land support the hoofs of Europa's kidnapper. Thus if the scenes on the lid and the short sides are considered side by side, it would appear as if a Dionysiac thiasos is mingling with a marine one. To what end will become clear from the connections among Europa, Nereids, and Dionysos.



Another important feature of Europa's iconography significant for the present analysis is Europa's similarity to Nereids, the sea nymphs. In ancient art, the iconographies of the Nereids and Europa are virtually indistinguishable: nubile women, in the nude or scantily clad, ride creatures of the sea, often reclining on them seductively as if on beds.<sup>75</sup> It is only the beast of burden that helps distinguish a daughter of Nereus from the Cretan princess. In at least a few instances that creature was pictured as a composite between a bull and a seahorse, further blurring the difference.<sup>76</sup> One rendering of a marine thiasos, the *Wedding of Poseidon and Amphitrite* on the second-century BCE Altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus, features a sea creature that seems conjured out of the Europa-Nereid connection, a seahorse with a bull's head (Fig. 8.13).<sup>77</sup>

Europa's strong iconographic linkages with the world of the sea thus help identify previously neglected connections among images on the Veroli box. The shorter side with putti in a seascape links with Europa's abduction on the lid, even though Europa and the bull are not shown as seaborne. At the same time, Dionysos on his feline-drawn cart joins visually with the revelry on the lid. The Byzantine artist thus linked the two shorter sides chiastically to the opposing scenes on the lid. The Europa myth connects with Eros in a seascape; the merry-making scene with dancers and musicians with Dionysos (Fig. 8.9). Therefore, the placements of scenes, though superficially seemingly mismatched, help draw tighter connections between Dionysos and the scenes linked to Europa.

Juxtaposing a marine thiasos (the context of Europa's abduction) with a Dionysian, one has precedents in ancient art. Land and sea celebration are joined on the fourth-century Mildenhall silver plate (Fig. 8.14), for instance, where the head of Okeanos serves as pivot of two circular registers with celebrants. The interior register features sea horses and Tritons mounted by Nereids, their nude bodies gracefully stretching on the backs of their riders. One Nereid is holding a billowing veil, just as in images of Europa. The exterior concentric circle presents an alcohol-fuelled Dionysiac revelry radiating out of the god of wine, who presides over the festivities. The god is clutching a cluster of grapes in his right hand and a pine-capped thyrsus in his left. A panther serves as





**Fig. 8.13** Nereids Riding Sea Creatures, Tritons, Amphitrite and Poseidon, and Erotes, marble relief from the Altar of Domitianus Ahenobarbus (Rome), height: 80 cm, width: 506 cm. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, acc. no. 239 (© Stephanic Pearson)

the obedient footstool for his left leg. A slightly bent older man reverently hands the deity a bowl of wine. The feast unfolding around the god clusters in smaller vignettes: a drunken satyr pursues a Maenad with a short shepherd's crook or alternatively dances with it; two young satyrs support an inebriated Hercules; a party of four maenads, two satyrs and one goat-legged Pan with a syrinx step to the beat of the tune they help create.

The world of Dionysos and the ocean-dwelling Nereids and Tritons that the Mildenhall plate juxtaposes with such ease do not share any mythological connections. The link between the two comes entirely through their nuptial nuances. Although mythological couples are



**Fig. 8.14** Great plate from the Mildenhall treasure, center: head of Okeanos, inner register: marine thiasos, outer register: Dionysiac thiasos, silver, diameter: 60.5 cm, weight: 8.25 kg, fourth century, found in the United Kingdom. London, The British Museum, acc. no. 1946, 1007.1 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

missing from both of the bacchanalia and the oceanic revelry, each separately could be deployed in wedding iconography. Significantly, these scenes are found on objects associated with nuptials, and the images decorating them occasionally include gifts in the shape of boxes similar to the Veroli. Among the marine processions with nuptial nuances is the Ahenobarbus relief mentioned earlier (Fig. 8.13). It depicts Nereids and Tritons celebrating the wedding of Poseidon and the nymph Amphitrite. The relief shows the newly married divine couple on a triton-drawn cart. To the viewer's left, a Nereid holding a rectangular box is riding side saddle on a bull-headed seahorse with coiled legs. A winged putto pulls the reins of the beast, gently drawing him toward the newlyweds. Another female figure next to the first Nereid is holding a torch in each hand while riding a seahorse. A third Nereid frames the composition to the right. The figure is likewise seaborne, reclining on a sea monster (*ketos*), spurred by two-winged Eroses.

Another object linking a marine celebration to a wedding is the famous fourth-century silver box in the British Museum that commemorates the wedding of Projecta and Secundus (Fig. 8.15).<sup>78</sup> Marine creatures, including Tritons and Nereids riding seahorses, were chosen for the lid. The celebration centres on the goddess Venus, who is arranging her hair in front of a mirror. There are two rectangular boxes incorporated in the iconographic program: one intended for the goddess and another one presented to Projecta. A rectangular container with a strigillated design can likewise be seen in the hand of one of the Nereids on the Bacchic Mildenhall plate.

The function of the Nereids, with or without gifts, is illuminated with the marriage hymn composed by the poet Claudian for the wedding of the emperor Honorius and Maria, Stilicho's daughter (ca. 398 CE). The poem describes the sea nymphs and their seaborne mounts; the nymphs act both as gift-bearing guests coming to the wedding and as assistants to Venus, who officiates at the ceremony. One nymph brings a girdle, another a necklace, and a third presents the bride with a pearl diadem.<sup>79</sup> Venus then adorns the bride with these gifts so that they become part of her wedding outfit. The poem, which may have been inspired by art, explains the function of Nereids as gift-givers when they collectively claim that neither Thetis nor their sister Amphitrite received more



**Fig. 8.15** The Projecta casket/box, silver, Rome, height: 28.6 cm, length: 56 cm (longest point), width: 48.8 cm (widest point), weight: 8.2 kg, fourth century, inscription on the lid: *SECVNDE ET PROIECTA VIVATIS IN CHRISTO*. London, The British Museum, acc. no. 1866, 1229.1 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

splendid gifts at their respective weddings.<sup>80</sup> Their gifts fashion the bride as the recipient of god-like wedding presents.

In the case of the Veroli box, there are four pictured ‘weddings’ (understood as sexual unions): the one about to unfold between Europa and Zeus; the one between Aphrodite and Ares; the implied one between Dionysos and Ariadne, the couple embracing on one of the long sides; and the doomed one between Achilles and Iphigeneia. There are no recognisable Nereids on the Veroli box. Instead, the putto lounging on a seahorse on the short side assumes the role of a Nereid. It is reclining seductively on the marine creature, baring his plump buttocks to the viewer, copying the iconography of Nereids riding sea creatures. The substitution of a Nereid for Eros is similar to the one on the lid, where Erotes play the role of Maenads. It can be inferred from this substitution that although the Byzantine artists were aware of the iconography of a marine thiasos as well as of its nuptial significance, appropriate as part of Europa’s or of Venus’s entourage, they decided to change a key feature in the marine celebration. Indeed the substitution highlights

Eros as the glue binding the images. Some mythological characters have morphed into Loves in order to unify the imagery visually and thus forge a tighter conceptual connection. The Veroli imagery can be seen as capturing an iconographic transformation that deepened over time, so that Eros and their games became the primary subjects of later Byzantine chests.<sup>81</sup>

The association between Dionysos and weddings further underscores the erotic nuances of the imagery. Eros and Dionysos, love and wine, were deemed natural companions in ancient art and literature. Consider one example among many: a floor mosaic (7 × 3.5 m) from Zeugma, dated to the late second/early third century and now partially preserved.<sup>82</sup> The mosaic depicts the wedding of Dionysos and Ariadne, imaging it as a merry celebration that precedes their lovemaking, copiously supplied with wine. The couple is shown seated on a couch at the centre of the composition. A fluted golden bowl is set on a three-legged table in front of them. Dionysos cradles a silver cup close to his chest; his right arm wrapped around Ariadne. A small winged Eros to the god's left offers him a silver cup. Behind Eros, in the foreground, a woman with a flowing green dress approaches the couple and offers them a chest filled with golden jewels. The chest's lid is attached with hinges, but its shape and relative size are similar to that of the Veroli box.<sup>83</sup> A younger man (a satyr or a man in the guise of satyr?) holding flutes and an older one, his head wreathed with ivy, are seen gesturing behind the women. The right side of the composition depicts two figures seated at a long table. The leftmost one, a man, is drinking from a silver cup, and his companion is resting her elbow on a short column or a cylindrical box. This is the god of wedding melodies, Hymenaios. A third figure, a woman (a Maenad?) lifts her right arm towards Ariadne, possibly dancing or making an offering of some kind. All of the represented figures may be family portraits.

The understanding of wine as an aphrodisiac attending weddings and amorous unions resonates with the sixth-century epithalamia of Dioskoros of Aphrodito, which render Dionysos a constant presence at weddings, 'bearing wine, love's adornment' ('ἔρωτος ἄγαλμα').<sup>84</sup> The same poem equates the bride with Ariadne and the groom as surpassing Dionysos (as well as Achilles, Bellerophon, Diomedes, Ares, and Herakles).<sup>85</sup> Similar sentiments about wine and love remained current ca. 1145, as is seen in Constantine Manasses's novel *Aristandros and Kallithea*.<sup>86</sup> That work claims that 'wine is Eros's brother' and 'Aphrodite's milk; and because of this wine and Eros are the things

most difficult to combat on earth'.<sup>87</sup> Another twelfth-century author, Nikephoros Basilakes (ca. 1115–1182), considers drunkenness an 'ally of Love' ('ἐπίκουρον Ἐρωτα'), whereas love and wine are both 'robbers of human souls'.<sup>88</sup>

The seemingly unusual pairing of Europa, Dionysos, and Eroses on the Veroli box then could be interpreted as a Byzantine rendition of a similar joining of marine and land revelries as shown on the Mildenhall plate and occasioned by a wedding.

### THE LONG SIDE WITH APHRODITE AND ARES

The erotic and nuptial elements on the lid and the shorts sides are amplified by the images on the long sides, most obviously so on the side featuring Aphrodite and Ares (Fig. 8.7). The visual and conceptual linking of the world of Dionysos and the marine revelry, to which Europa's scene belongs, should be understood as animated by the age-old conceptual bond in the ancient imaginary among weddings, Eros, sea-born Aphrodite (Eros's mother), and the pleasures of Dionysos.

The vitality of that link can be demonstrated by comparing the Veroli box to other contemporary objects, to ancient art, and to literary works. The V&A ivory panel stands as the closest stylistic contemporary parallel to the Veroli box and may in fact have been produced by the same atelier or artist.<sup>89</sup> It exhibits a similar approach to connecting visually and thematically different myths. The artist joined two scenes: Europa's kidnaping and Ares cupping Aphrodite's chin. An Eros, arms and legs spread in an x-shape, links the two depictions. Another Eros, holding a torch and parting the waters in front of the bovine Zeus, pulls the rein that restrains the bull's head. No such rein is found on the Veroli box and the two scenes are integrated into different compositions. Yet in each configuration, the presence of Eroses commands attention. On the Veroli box, the Aphrodite-Ares group acts as the centre of a mini-tableau of Eroses taming wild animals (Fig. 8.7), whereas Europa and Zeus seamlessly join a Dionysiac revelry through the aid of putti serving as visual ligatures.

In Achilles Tatius's novel *Leucippe and Clitophon* (end of 100s CE), we find the following reflections on Eros, Dionysos, and Aphrodite: 'Eros and Dionysos are two of the most violent of the gods; they can grasp the soul and drive it so far towards madness that it loses all restraint; Eros fires it with flames, which are his attribute, while Dionysos supplies wine which is as fuel to the fire: for wine is the very sustenance



of love'.<sup>90</sup> The same work describes the goddess Aphrodite presiding over love's mysteries, understood as sexual union,<sup>91</sup> whereas it refers to orgasm 'at the acme of Aphrodite' and 'the outcome of Aphrodite'.<sup>92</sup>

Eros provides the link between scenes on more than one Byzantine object. To comprehend the ends for the forging of such unions, it is necessary to turn to the function of mythological images. Aphrodite and Ares represent the most direct route to such an analysis. The gods are similarly rendered on both the Veroli box and the V&A panel. The god of war, mighty Ares, is attired in Roman military garments, his shield by his side, his spear in his left hand, his right leg crossing confidently in front of the left, and he is cupping Aphrodite's chin in a traditional gesture of erotic supplication. The goddess appears nearly nude, pulling at her garment to reveal her sublime body. This type of Aphrodite, pulling her garment with her body revealed or clothed is found in ancient statuary as well as in painting and originates with the type of Venus known as the Genetrix, the Progenitor. Roman copies of Hellenistic originals show the goddess pulling her garment, her dress slipping off her left shoulder, and holding an apple in her right hand.<sup>93</sup>

A close parallel to the Veroli and V&A type is a late-third-century wooden painted panel from a chest excavated in Egypt showing Aphrodite standing, a mantle covering her back, putting on a necklace, her body revealed to the viewer.<sup>94</sup> The companion piece shows a syncretic deity, Isis-Fortuna, holding a cornucopia in one hand and the rudder of Fortuna in the other. Though now cut separated, the Aphrodite and Isis-Fortuna panels were probably once joined together on an approximately 10-cm-tall painted box.<sup>95</sup> Aside from providing a visual parallel to the Veroli Venus that likely came from a box, the Isis-Fortuna figure supplies a connection to an ivory box, suggesting that the cast of figures on the Veroli follows a long decorative tradition associated with containers.<sup>96</sup> The lid of the ivory box with Isis-Fortuna, now in the Dumbarton Oaks (DO) collection, shows a very similar image of the figure found on the wooden fragment from Egypt. The only difference between the ivory carving and the wooden panel is the presence of a hovering Eros holding a round mirror in front of the deity on the ivory object.<sup>97</sup> The back of the box includes a Maenad; Dionysos holding a thyrsus; and another male figure, possibly Heracles, to judge from the lion skin wrapped around his shoulders. Scholars have commonly seen the DO box as medicinal, yet the presence of Eros, a mirror, Dionysos, and two figures from his world point to the realm where love and wine

mingle most often in the ancient imaginary: weddings where wine flavours the lovemaking of newly wedded couples, Christian and pagan alike.<sup>98</sup>

The Projecta box provides another example of that convergence (Fig. 8.15). The program also points at the way to interpret the imagery meant for a wedding. The lid shows Aphrodite seated on a shell held by two Tritons and arranging her hair. The goddess lords over a marine gathering. Two Tritons lift her shell-shaped seat, while a gift-bearing Eros stands on the back of each of the shell-bearers. The left-hand figure offers the goddess a rectangular box. Each of the adjoining sides of the lid depicts a Nereid riding a sea creature; in each instance, a putto is swimming alongside.<sup>99</sup> A pattern of laurel leaves borders the imagery on the lid. Right under Aphrodite is a seated, fully clad woman, also arranging her hair. An inscription along the rim of the box and an image on top of the box help us understand the object as related to the marriage of a woman by the name of Projecta and a man called Secundus, both of whom were Christians. The lid features two erotes holding an *imago clipeata* with a portrait of the couple, bordered with a laurel wreath: Projecta is holding a scroll and Secundus seems to be speaking. The images in the entire lower part of the box are framed by a rinceau pattern with vine leaves and grapes, subtly reminding the viewer of Christ, the vine (John 15:1), or more likely wine, 'love's adornment', the usual companion to weddings.<sup>100</sup>

The visual alignment between the Christian Projecta and Aphrodite and their gestures invites us to comprehend Projecta as a second Aphrodite (Fig. 8.15), a notion strengthened by the presence of gift-bearing Erotes that mimic Projecta's servants, likewise bringing gifts.<sup>101</sup> The British Museum box connects the comparison to Aphrodite to the specific occasion of Projecta's marriage to Secundus. Significantly, the chosen method for the association is a silver container with a truncated trapezoidal lid, very similar to the kind we find in bone and ivory boxes from the middle Byzantine period.<sup>102</sup>

This conceptual link between a particular kind of imagery and a utilitarian object calls for highlighting two further connections: first, between a bride and Aphrodite and, second, the one between the realm of Aphrodite and weddings and boxes. Equating a woman to the goddess of love as is imaged on the Projecta box has deep roots in ancient art and goes all the way back to the early Hellenistic period and the Ptolemaic queen Arsinoë II.<sup>103</sup> In Roman art, portraying a woman



with the features of Venus can be traced to Livia, the wife of Augustus. A sardonyx cameo in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts shows the first Augusta with the hairdo and seductively slipping garment reminiscent of Venus Genetrix.<sup>104</sup> The close association between imperial women and Venus continued in the following centuries and was emulated by ordinary Romans. In the second century, funerary portraits of couples in the guise of Mars and Venus embracing became popular in part because of the statue of Marcus Aurelius and Faustina II, which depicted them in a gentle embrace as Mars and Venus.<sup>105</sup> These second-century images of Venus and Mars combined portrait likenesses with divine bodies. The women are either clad or nude, whereas their male companions are always shown in the nude, with Mars's helmet being the only body covering.

Some Roman art historians consider theomorphic portrayals as a form of visual eulogy in which the divine attribute serves to highlight a particular quality in the subject.<sup>106</sup> Physical qualities as well as agency were considered. In the assimilations to Venus and to Mars, incomparable, eternal beauty and passion between the pair seem the most obvious attraction for choosing them as paragons. Moreover, the adulterous pair had emphatically positive associations, as Venus and Mars were considered to be the founding deities of Rome. Therefore, the point of the assimilation was to present respectable Roman couples as akin to the 'parents' of the Roman people. The statuary group commemorating them eulogises ordinary married couples as the ancestors of a distinguished line worthy of the founding gods.<sup>107</sup>

Along with being a paradigm for emulation, Aphrodite played an important part in nuptials, to which lovemaking stands as the culminating act in the ancient social imaginary; the 'mysteries' of Aphrodite equal lovemaking; the couple's beauty rivals that of divinities.<sup>108</sup> Examples of these connections are abundant and ruled the poetry and the visual arts for centuries. One of the earliest comes from Sappho's works (fl. late seventh–early-sixth-century BCE). In one poem lovemaking becomes a sacrament that takes place in a sanctuary of the goddess of love.<sup>109</sup> In others, the goddess of love garlands the groom, makes the wedding bed, and prepares the bride, who weds a god-like groom.<sup>110</sup> Ancient authors dutifully recognised and/or simply imitated Sappho's mastery in matters of wedding songs,<sup>111</sup> and poets continued to draw inspiration from Sappho well into the late-fourth-century CE. The epithalamium of Claudian for the emperor Honorius and Maria, both of whom were Christian, elaborates on Sapphic nuptial motifs. As the bride immerses

herself in the poetry of Sappho and Homer, Venus/Aphrodite serves as her matchmaker and organises her nuptials. At the goddess's command, her attendants, a bevy of Erotes, Graces, and Nereids, keep Mars/Ares at bay and decorate the palace and the marriage bed; Nereids bring precious gifts to the bride.<sup>112</sup> The poet describes the young groom's charms as superior to those of divine Castor, Achilles, Apollo, Bacchus, Adonis, and Hippolytus.<sup>113</sup>

On the Projecta box, Aphrodite's role as officiator at weddings is hinted at with the decoration, which shows Nereids and Erotes bringing gifts to the goddess of love,<sup>114</sup> while attendants carry similar objects to Projecta.<sup>115</sup> It is as if Aphrodite orchestrates the actions that unfold on the sides below and around her.

Similarly, on the Veroli box, a triumphant Aphrodite and her son rule the world of humankind and animals.<sup>116</sup> Venus and her companion stand in the middle of the composition, which the eye perceives as one long piece, despite being made of two separate panels. The individual vignettes show Erotes putting bridles on beasts. To the left of Aphrodite, the roped and tamed animals include a roaring lioness, a leaping hound, a horned stag, and an eagle. The group to the right of the goddess and Mars features two vignettes. The left-hand one depicts a horned bovine, one putto on his back and another one whipping its behind. The adjacent scene centres on a neighing stallion. One Eros grabs the horse's bridle, a second kneels down to perform a fellatio, and a third one hovers in midair, chubby legs sticking out of a cup that also contains a sheaf of grain. Could the grain here allude to mysteries?

Simon conceives the taming as related to Aphrodite's girdle, *kestos*, an enchanted object that Hera gave to the goddess.<sup>117</sup> She interprets this mini-tableau as an allegory about the power of Eros over all animals, a notion forcibly expressed in Eumathios Makrembolites's famous poetic description from ca. 1198 of Eros 'the king' ('βασιλεύς').<sup>118</sup> Simon's emphasis is on the god of love, but the vignettes centre on Aphrodite. The image posits the goddess as the mistress under whose gaze and prompting Erotes tame wild beasts on land and in the air into obedient pets. Mighty Ares's gesture of supplication likewise affirms the goddess's power over humankind.<sup>119</sup> It communicates Aphrodite's tender power, channelled in the world through her own charms and the help of her son. In addition to the magic girdle, laughter is among the goddess's 'soft' weapons. In the *Iliad*, a text widely read in Byzantium, she is laughter-loving, an epithet used to characterise her as late as the twelfth century.<sup>120</sup>

The images link Aphrodite's erotic power over humankind and nature to a specific occasion indicated by the long torch in goddess's right hand and also hinted at by Ares's gesture of supplication. The significance of this torch has been neglected and indeed Weitzmann considered it 'meaningless'.<sup>121</sup> Yet, the torch is an ancient symbol of weddings. In Greek art, torches are the ubiquitous companions to wedding processions, their indispensability congruent with the nocturnal character of the celebrations.<sup>122</sup> They are most commonly associated with Hymenaios, the youthful god of marriage, and with the wedding song sung during the procession that delivered the bride to the groom's home.<sup>123</sup> The mosaic from Zeugma showing the wedding of Dionysos and Ariadne features a torch-bearing Hymenaios. Torches generally are synecdoches for nuptials.<sup>124</sup> Another Roman mosaic of the same mythological wedding is a third-century floor mosaic in the Shahba Museum in Syria. The couple gazes into each other's eyes while lounging side by side on a couch. Between them stands a winged Eros, labelled Pothos, Desire, who holds a torch in one hand and embraces Ariadne with the other, while looking at Dionysos. The flame-bearing boy thus communicates the attraction and the lovemaking soon to unfold. Maron, known as a companion to Dionysos, his and Ariadne's descendant, and an able vintner, points to a cup in Ariadne's hand. Maron's suggestive gesture and the presence of the drunken Heracles at their feet, a sizeable skyphos next to him, indicate that good wine spiced the journey to the couple's union.<sup>125</sup>

Torches are likewise present in the nuptial scenes discussed earlier: the Ahenobarbus relief, the sarcophagus with Dionysos and Ariadne, and the floor mosaic from Zeugma. We also find long flaming torches on the V&A ivory panel, the Veroli box, a Byzantine box from Pula (Croatia), and another one in the National Archaeological Museum of Cividale.<sup>126</sup> The torch in Aphrodite's hand gives further traction to the idea that the Veroli box and other related objects were wedding gifts. Presenting the goddess holding a torch with Mars supplicating her illustrates the idea eloquently expressed in Claudian's poetry centuries earlier: 'Let the trumpets of war cease and the propitious torch of marriage (*felix taeda*) banish savage Mars afar' ('Cersent litui saevum procul/Martem felix taeda releget').<sup>127</sup>

The Veroli Mars is not banished but rather is rendered a suppliant by Venus's erotic allure and the marriage torch. The torches, wine-drinking cups and ewers, and erotes represented on Byzantine boxes thus help us understand the overall meaning of the Veroli lid and the V&A panel as images appropriate for weddings. The imagery in combination with the

object it adorns therefore allows us finally to place the Veroli box in the proper thematic and utilitarian category. The theme is a nuptial union; the object is a wedding gift of the kind found aplenty in nuptial scenes on Classical Greek vases, Hellenistic marble reliefs, Greek and Roman mirror covers, Roman mosaics, and ivory and bone boxes. The Veroli box celebrates the marriage of a Byzantine couple by deploying the classical visual idiom about weddings and the power of Eros.

If we are to interpret the scenes allegorically, deploying ancient ideas about how images worked in tandem with ideas about female and male beauty and marriage, then a possible route would be to think of the juxtaposition of the images as a story of *eros*, tailored to the particular circumstances of the patron. In an age-old tradition, Europa, shown on the lid, eulogizes the woman who received the box as beautiful as the Cretan princess who subdued the mightiest of gods with his charms. The image of Aphrodite functions in the same way. Beauty and passion are thus highlighted in a time-honoured manner that goes back centuries. In the sixth century, Dioskoros likened a Christian bride's beauty to that of Europa.<sup>128</sup> Projecta and other Roman women before her were compared to Aphrodite. Both figures were renowned beauties, for whose favour male gods endured significant humiliations: Zeus took the shape of a bull, whereas fierce Ares/Mars threw all his weapons and caution to the wind at the sight of Aphrodite's sublime beauty. Ares, Dionysos, and Zeus, then, stand for the handsome man whose heart was enthralled with her charms. Both literary and visual sources remark on the power of Eros over even the mightiest of warriors.<sup>129</sup> The love affair hinted at on the Veroli box began violently but ended happily in the realm of Dionysos, as a lack of consent and a sense of danger gave way to a celebration with nuptials.

One example from the twelfth century is of Pasiphaë's imagined response to the bull she fell in love with, which helps us immerse ourselves in the thought world that imagined such connections. Pasiphaë's bull is at once a double of Zeus and of a young man. She (in the words of Nikephoros Basilakes) describes him thus:

[A]s beautiful as a statue ('ἀγαλαματίας'), entirely charming ('ἐπαφρόδιτος'); his love of laughter is that of Aphrodite ('τὸ φιλομειδὲς Ἀφροδίτης'), his flashing eyes are those of Love ('τὸ χαροπὸν Ἔρωτος') – such great love-inducing desire ('ἀφροδίσιον ἕμερον') does he drip from his eyes. [...] He is not ferocious like a wild beast, [...], but like a young man being perfected by

the Graces and Aphrodite he gleams with the gracefulness of his appearance and the gentleness of his own gaze. He perceives his own beauty, and is not unaware that he is handsome [...] or Zeus himself might have become such a bull when he abducted Europa. Such a divine radiance surrounds this bull of mine.<sup>130</sup>

The myth of Pasiphaë, ostensibly about bestiality, affords a glimpse into how mythological figures helped to delineate beauty and desire in the Byzantine imagination. References to Zeus, Europa, and Eros conjured up positive associations with beauty, grace and allure.

The games Eros plays on humans and wild animals likewise have to be understood allegorically as evocative of the power of Eros.<sup>131</sup> Plenty of literary sources attest to the god's awesome might, interpreted sometimes as tyranny, but at other times as bliss. In Plato, he is a tyrant, yet also a force for harmony, a universal principle.<sup>132</sup> Ovid sees him as a 'cruel boy', 'all too potent' with an 'empire of [his] own'.<sup>133</sup> He imagines Eros enthroned in his heart, a seat gained by shooting the poet with one of his arrows.<sup>134</sup> The god's armies are caresses, error, and madness.<sup>135</sup> He subdues the stars, the gods in heaven, mighty kings, and common people alike. In Longus's novel about Daphnis and Chloe, Eros is the potent and benign matchmaker.<sup>136</sup> These ideas are reiterated and elaborated on in twelfth-century Byzantine literature. Like Plato, Nikephoros Basilakes pronounces Love the most ancient of gods, 'who brings forth nature' and 'all creation'; he is a god 'who dominates everyone, as the inescapable winged one, the invincible archer, the all-seeing torchbearer'.<sup>137</sup> In the novel *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the god of love is a 'despot', a lad sitting on a throne with his own army; he aims his sword at men and his torch at women, but reserves his bows for wild beasts.<sup>138</sup> The young lover addresses him thus:

O emperor Eros, most powerful of all the gods, who lords it over souls, who sends out arrows, who entraps souls with eyes, who enflames the innermost being and enflames the entire heart.<sup>139</sup>

Images of power, savagery, and fiery destruction are commonly attributed to Eros by another Byzantine author. Niketas Eugeneianos calls him 'all-taming, all-daring, all-ruling',<sup>140</sup> a fire-breathing 'offspring of savage beasts',<sup>141</sup> who 'slays, slaughters', 'enflames', 'consumes with fire', 'strikes', 'destroys', 'poisons', and 'overthrows'.<sup>142</sup> The fragments of the

novel *Aristandos and Kallithea* convey similar ideas of Eros's rule over all living creatures.<sup>143</sup> The imagery on the Veroli box expresses these ideas through the vignettes of Erotes taming animals. The figure of Love nuzzling a lioness and another one nursing from its teats illustrate the notion 'Eros, the offspring of savage beasts'. The taming and whipping, as well as the scene of fellatio render the concepts of 'all-taming, all-daring, all-ruling' visually. Most Byzantine boxes and fragments represent Erotes who shoot projectiles, attack with swords, and tame wild beasts, but also dance, make music, and perform acrobatic tricks. They, too, then should be considered as accompanying wedding gifts although in terms of our tastes, the content may appear irreverent for such occasions.<sup>144</sup>

I interpret the changes in the ancient prototypes on the Veroli box by the insertion of new scenes, such as the men throwing stones, or substituting Erotes for Maenads or Nereids as purposeful alterations introduced at the behest of the patron or the vision of the artist, rather than as misunderstandings. The alterations in this case seem appropriate for an iconographic program centred on Eros, one that celebrates a wedding, the result of significant challenges. Ancient examples of boxes given as gifts at weddings, presumably filled with jewellery (as on the Zeugma mosaic) or other precious items, including money, as suggested by the coin-like design on the lid, imply similar uses for the Veroli box.<sup>145</sup>

### THE LONG SIDE WITH THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENEIA

The approach of praising individuals and celebrating weddings with the help of gods and myths brings two final aspects of the legacy of classical nuptial/erotic art and amatory literature into high relief: diversion and education. Sappho proclaimed Eros a story-weaver ('μυθοπλόκος'), a coiner of fables.<sup>146</sup> Longus claimed that his entire novel of Daphnis and Chloe was a picture he saw at the grove of the nymphs and that he intended the work as a lesson.<sup>147</sup> The content of the novel—a coming-of-age narrative about sexual awakening—leaves the nature of that lesson clear enough. Achilles Tatius observed, 'a story of love ('λόγος ἐρωτικός') is the very fuel of desire'.<sup>148</sup> Nikephoros Basilakes likewise wrote of Eros's qualities as a story-maker, a god who plays with real people and always mixes pain with love and joy with suffering. He has Eros deliver the following soliloquy:

I, the wise Love, rehearse/declaim/pursue (‘μελετῶ’) a drama of love, I, the clever and beautiful Love, who am both young and old, who both shoots the bow and smiles, so that what causes pain is not without love and what brings gladness is not without pain.<sup>149</sup>

‘The bow and smiles’ approach to Eros resonates with the love stories selected for the Veroli box. They delight the receiver with both gladness and pain, two inseparable aspects of Love, the weaver of tales. This is how the stories on the long side fit into the whole program. Whereas the myths discussed so far portray happy outcomes, those on the other long side meditate on the destructive power of Eros. Not all of whom the god pierces with his arrows end up happily in love. His poisoned-dipped arrows lead some to suffering.<sup>150</sup> This part of the Veroli box presents warnings and encourages humility through love stories that end in separation.

The first one has long puzzled scholars. A standing female figure shown in the nude leans for support on the shoulder of an attractive young man, his shapely buttocks turned toward the viewer. Billowing fabric partly covers the female figure’s pubic area, but actually leaves little of her body to the imagination. She has bent her left foot and presented it to an Eros with a mature face, who is pulling a thorn out of her heel. Her male companion is holding the reins of a rearing horse; a line drawn from his arms and the woman’s calf leads straight to the thorn in her foot. The scene copies no extant artistic precedents and has been considered somewhat of a puzzle, but it is traditionally seen as Phaedra and Hippolytus.<sup>151</sup> John Beckwith has pointed to the connection between images of Aphrodite loosening her sandal and the female figure, but the significance of that connection in combination with the thorn has eluded him.<sup>152</sup>

In the context of the rest of the box’s iconographic program, this image should be identified as Aphrodite and her lover Adonis. Adonis was the mortal man renowned for his beauty with whom the goddess of love became enamoured. The couple appears frequently in ancient art, and their story was well known. One of the most moving versions comes from Bion’s *Lament for Adonis* (early-third-century BCE), which recounts Adonis’s death and Aphrodite’s desperation at his demise. A boar sent by Ares (as we learn from other works) gored the young hunter in the thigh:

I wail for Adonis; the Loves wail in answer. Fair Adonis lies on the hills, wounded in his thigh with a tusk, wounded in his white thigh with a white tusk, and he grieves Cypris (Aphrodite) as he breathes his last faint breath. His dark blood drips over his snow-white flesh, and under his brows his eyes grow dim; the rosy hue flees from his lip, and around it dies the kiss, too, which Cypris will never carry off again. Even when he is not alive his kiss pleases Cypris; but Adonis does not know that she kissed him when he was dead. I wail for Adonis; the Loves wail in answer. Adonis has a cruel, cruel wound in his thigh; but greater is the wound Cytherea (Aphrodite) has in her heart.

[H]ounds howl and the mountain nymphs weep; but Aphrodite, her tresses loosed, roams grief-stricken among the thickets with her hair unbraided, barefoot ('ἀσάνδαλος'); the brambles tear her as she goes and draw her sacred blood.<sup>153</sup>

The poem describes Aphrodite's despair, her roaming the thickets dishevelled and barefoot ('ἀσάνδαλος', lit. without sandals). Her tears turned into anemones and Adonis's blood sprouted roses.<sup>154</sup> The Veroli image is obviously not an illustration of the poem, but the poem helps us read it. It shows the two lovers as they are usually depicted, standing next to each other. The Eros-plucked thorn suggests proleptically the sad ending of their affair. The thorn was removed after the grieving Aphrodite wandered barefoot among the brambles. The horse, similarly, suggests the future hunt that would conclude with Adonis's death. Beauty and passion between the lovers is what connects this couple to Aphrodite and Ares or to Europa and Zeus. However, Adonis's untimely death, a great cause of distress for the goddess, makes this love story a sorrowful one.

Twelfth-century writers such as Nikephoros Basilakes knew the myth and he reflected on it in his *Ethopoeiae*, short rhetorical pieces written from the perspective of a mythological character or a historical figure reacting to difficult circumstances.<sup>155</sup> In the story that tells of beautiful Myrrha, who fell in love with her own father and conceived her son Adonis with him, Eros recounts the myth of Aphrodite and her thorn-pricked foot. The god recounts how the blood of the goddess dyed the rose red and concluded: 'for everything that comes from the gods and their divinely flowing blood must grow to be most beautiful: among the gods, Aphrodite; among living beings, the human; and among flowers,



the rose' ('τὸ ρόδον').<sup>156</sup> The red rose, an offspring of Aphrodite's blood, thus also helps explain the choice of the design of the strips that frame the images. Garlands of roses are appropriate decorative elements for wedding chests.

The image shown next to Aphrodite and Adonis also has to be interpreted as a love story with an unhappy ending. Although the two scenes are self-contained, an Eros visually stitches them together, inviting the viewer to consider them in relation to one another.<sup>157</sup> The common ground line for the two scenes prompts likewise. The image of the young and handsome man holding a horse in each scene further encourages comparison. In this case, the identity of the second man is sufficiently clear: he is Bellerophon, identified by the winged horse that bends his head and drinks water at the Spring at Peirene.<sup>158</sup> The identity of the woman who engages the hero in conversation is less clear. As she is holding a long torch, previous researchers have seen her as one of the ancient goddesses to whom torches are common: Demeter, Persephone, or Hecate.<sup>159</sup> The torch as we have seen has associations with weddings. Simon considers it a mark of a married woman and, like Weitzmann, identifies the speaker as Stheneboia, a married woman, who fell in love with Bellerophon.<sup>160</sup> Stheneboia's myth was the subject of a lost play by Euripides. The mythographer Apollodorus recounted the myth in his *Library*.<sup>161</sup> After Bellerophon rejected her, Stheneboia accused him of raping her and her husband devised a secret plan to kill him. The scheme did not succeed; indeed it resulted in Bellerophon marrying Stheneboia's sister. The news of that marriage led Stheneboia to suicide, making her a victim of love, just like Adonis.<sup>162</sup> Thus the iconographic connections between the two couples are supported by a thematic link: amorous outcomes that ended in tragedy and death.<sup>163</sup>

Heartbreak likewise connects these scenes with the ivory panel to the right, which shows the sacrifice of Iphigeneia. The Iphigeneia panel dwells on deception, false love, and broken promises.<sup>164</sup> Weitzmann identified the scene as representing the myth of Iphigeneia as related in Euripides's play *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, which the tragedian left unfinished.<sup>165</sup> The sacrifice scene in which Iphigeneia is miraculously saved from death is a later addition penned by a Byzantine writer. Weitzmann attributed great significance to the later addition because of how tightly he sees the Veroli images linked to no longer extant illuminated manuscripts by Euripides.<sup>166</sup> Yet, whether Iphigeneia died at the altar or was

saved, as attested in other ancient as well as Byzantine sources, she did not marry Achilles, her promised spouse.<sup>167</sup> What is important here is not so much her fate but her failed wedding. Because her father, rather than the god of love was her matchmaker, no Eros grace the image.

Nevertheless, I think that the figure of Hygeia suggests a way to interpret Iphigeneia's fate. The myth of Iphigeneia, as represented in the Veroli box, departs from the iconography of the sacrifice in ancient art. In addition to Agamemnon (shown seated), Achilles (usually identified as the man holding the basket), the seer Calchas (holding a long knife and about to cut a lock from the maiden's hair), Iphigeneia and a youth leading the young woman towards the priest, there are two extra figures: a man holding a sword, whom Weitzmann identified as Asklepios, and Hygeia feeding a snake.<sup>168</sup> Whether Byzantine viewers would have identified the figure in front of Hygeia as Asklepios can be doubted, but it is more difficult to have such qualms about Hygeia and her snake.<sup>169</sup> The youth then is just a filler, an image that balances the composition, so that there are an equal number of figures on either side of Iphigeneia, whereas Hygeia is included for a reason. Perhaps the personification of Health implies the maiden's miraculous rescue by Artemis. The whole panel then presents a story centred on the sacrifice to which Iphigeneia's father ensnared her using the pretext of marrying her off to Achilles.<sup>170</sup> After realising the deceit, the maiden nevertheless accepted her fate, only to be rescued by Artemis. Her salvation then contrasts with the unhappy endings of the adjacent love stories.

## CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, the program on the Veroli box evinces the enduring power of the classical tradition in conceptualising female and male beauty and the power of *eros*: the pangs, sufferings, and danger, as well as the joy and the pleasures. The Byzantine artists offered fresh interpretations for centuries-old stories about love to celebrate the unions of Christian couples.

It is not too far-fetched to suggest that they did so because compelling Christian substitutions for the charms of Eros, Venus, and Dionysos, or indeed passion, were lacking. To judge from the extant types of rosette boxes, the only other kind that could be considered Christian-themed marriage boxes are the ones featuring Adam and Eve.

Goldschmidt and Weitzmann's catalogue notes five such chests that are preserved intact and some sixteen detached plaques.<sup>171</sup> By contrast, intact *eros*-themed boxes number twenty-eight and there are a dozen surviving plaques.<sup>172</sup> Although the Adam and Eve boxes portray the parents of humanity in the nude, these images do not conjure up the concepts of divine beauty, transforming passion, or celebration, which are rendered so enchantingly in the Veroli images. They fail to capture, as Claudian puts it, the moment 'when lips have united soul to soul' or when 'all night long, [...] the music of the flute resounds and the crowd set free from law's harsh restraints, with eager licence indulges in the permitted jest'.<sup>173</sup> Rather, the chests with images of Adam and Eve seem to accent the consequences of disobedience: expulsion from paradise and hard labour.<sup>174</sup> Like the Veroli coffer, however, they do convey the notion of a couple. Rather than presenting lovers, chests and fragments featuring Adam and Eve depict married life as sharing in the work and helping each other in getting things done, whether in gathering crops or in forging metal.<sup>175</sup>

This brings us finally to the consumers of classical images. The evidence is meagre but suggestive. We find them among the Constantinopolitan and provincial elite who were readers of ancient and medieval novels and classical literature.<sup>176</sup> In an often-referred to passage by the canonist Theodore Balsamon (ca. 1130/1140–d. 1195, Patriarch of Antioch, ca. 1185–1190), the patrons of images of cupids ('ἔρωτίδια') were the wealthy, who had them displayed in their houses in different media, including paintings as well as stucco reliefs, which were sometimes gilded.<sup>177</sup> Traces of gilding are still visible on some of the rosettes of the Veroli box. Gold mosaics were not reserved for sacred spaces. They brightened palaces and other secular places, such as the interior of the bath of Emperor Leo the Wise (886–912), a building whose decoration though steeped in ideas of Christian dominion showed no trace of Christian imagery.<sup>178</sup> Its decoration, in the words of Paul Magdalino, 'would not have been to the liking of the Byzantine clergy, whether "extremists" or "moderates", "conservatives", or "liberals"'.<sup>179</sup> The same can be said about the images on the Veroli box and other similar objects. Their numbers suggest that the Byzantine imaginary about love and the material and literary remains by which we evaluate it was rich, complex, and not necessarily conceived in Christian terms.

## NOTES

1. Margaret Longhurst, *Victoria and Albert Museum; Department of Architecture and Sculpture; Carvings in Ivory; Part I: Up to the 13th Century* (London: The Board of Education, 1927), 34–36, pl. XII, XIII, acc. no. 216-1865; Adolf Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfeinbeinskulpturen des X.-XIII. Jhs.*, vol. I: Kästen (1930), No. 21 (hereafter: G&W); John Beckwith, *The Veroli Casket*, Museum Monograph, No. 18 (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1962); Helen Evans and William D. Wixom (eds.), *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art: Distributed by Harry N. Abrams, 1997), cat. no. 153, 230–31; Erika Simon, 'Nonnos und das Elfenbeinkästchen aus Veroli', *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 79 (1964): 279–334; Anthony Cutler, 'On Byzantine Boxes', *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 42–43 (1984–1985): 42–45; Henry Maguire, 'Other Icons: The Classical Nude in Byzantine Bone and Ivory Carvings', *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 62 (2004): 9–20; Paul Williamson, *Medieval Ivory Carvings: Early Christian to Romanesque* (London: V&A Publishing, 2010), 77–83 (with some other references that mention the object in passim); Paroma Chatterjee, 'Vision, Transformation, and the Veroli Casket', *Oxford Art Journal* 36.3 (2013): 325–44; Alicia Walker, 'Laughing at Eros and Aphrodite: Sexual Inversion and Its Resolution in the Clacissicizing Arts of Medieval Byzantium', in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and Laughter*, ed. Margaret Alexiou and Douglas Cairns (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 264–77. In preferring the term 'box' in reference to a category of objects usually referred to as 'caskets', I follow Anthony Cutler's observation of the 'funereal connotation' of the noun 'casket'. See, Cutler, 'Byzantine Boxes', 46. In my opinion box, chest, and coffer should be preferred to 'casket'.
2. The ideas presented in this study foreshadow my monograph on Eros in the arts of antiquity and the Middle Ages. The present chapter grew out of a research paper for a graduate seminar on the Classical Tradition in Byzantium that I took with Prof. Ioli Kalavrezou in 1999/2000. I presented the core ideas of that paper at the Byzantine Studies Conference in 2002. For the abstract, see 'The Middle Byzantine Ivory Box of Veroli in the Context of Literary Ideas About Romantic Love' in BSC Archives, [http://www.bsana.net/conference/archives/2002/abstracts\\_2002.html](http://www.bsana.net/conference/archives/2002/abstracts_2002.html), accessed 3.1.2018. That paper argued for understanding the images on the Veroli box in part as related to ideas about love as presented in the ancient Greek and Byzantine novels. I am grateful to Prof.

Kalavrezou for introducing me to the Veroli box, the methodological difficulties of interpretation it poses, and her own inspiring example in dealing with the subject of the classical tradition. Although this chapter differs from her scholarship, it is nevertheless steeped in the questions she posed for me all those years ago. I also would like to thank Prof. Gloria Ferrari Pinney, whose work on images of Greek myth and Greek women has deeply informed the methodology of this chapter and my own analytical approaches to art. I acknowledge the lasting inspiration of my teachers with gratitude. I also would like to thank Paul Williamson and the curatorial team at the Victoria and Albert Museum for allowing me to examine the Veroli Box out of its cage and take photographs, which aided me tremendously with my research. Vessela Anguelova, Evelyn Grossberg, and Brian DeLay provided valuable suggestions. Their generosity is highly appreciated. I would also like to thank the editors of this volume for their helpful recommendations and questions, which introduced many improvements.

3. On the social imaginary, see Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), 136–45. For application of the concept to the symbolic systems of the ancient world, see Leslie Kurke, *Coins, Bodies, Games, and Gold: The Politics of Meaning in Archaic Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 4–5 (for a definition).
4. Sappho 130 (Hephaestion, *Handbook on Meters*), ed. and trans. LCL 142, 147–48.
5. Williamson, *Carvings*, 77.
6. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, 23–67 (the catalogue includes 125 entries, but not all of them are of intact objects). Anthony Cutler classifies it as ‘the largest single class of Byzantine secular art to have survived’. See Cutler, ‘Byzantine Boxes’, 32; Paul Speck, ‘Die Rosettenkästchen. Originalarbeiten oder Versuche einer Verwendung von vorhandenem Material?’, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 86–87 (1994): 83; Gudrun Bühl, ‘Die Regelmässigkeit des Unregelmässigen: Überlegungen zum Herstellungsverfahren der sog. Rosettenkästen’, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93 (2000): 23.
7. Kurt Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art*, Studies in Manuscript Illumination (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), esp. 152–208.
8. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, esp. 152–208.
9. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 152–53.
10. Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Histoire de l’art byzantin considéré principalement dans les miniatures*, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie de l’Art, 1886–1991); Kurt Weitzmann, *The Joshua Roll: A Work of the Macedonian Renaissance*

- (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948); idem, 'Euripides Scenes in Byzantine Art', *Hesperia* 18 (1949): 159–210; idem, *Mythology*; idem, 'The Survival of Mythological Representations in Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Their Impact on Christian Iconography', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960): 43–68.
11. For the Macedonian Renaissance, see the very useful summary and analysis in Alicia Walker, 'Exotic Elements in Middle Byzantine Secular Art and Aesthetics: 843–1204', unpublished thesis (Harvard University, 2004), 18–23. From the point of view of dating of ivories (mapped onto perceived renaissances), see Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, 'Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 305–25.
  12. Ioli Kalavrezou, 'The Cup of San Marco and the "Classical" in Byzantium', in *Late Antique and Medieval Art of the Mediterranean*, ed. Eva R. Hoffman (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 274–75 (quote).
  13. *Ibid.*, eadem, 278. For a different view of the San Marco cup, see Alicia Walker, 'Meaningful Mingling: Classicizing Imagery and Islamicizing Script in a Byzantine Bowl', *The Art Bulletin* 90.1 (2008): 32–53.
  14. Simon, 'Veroli', 285.
  15. In the *Dionysiaca*, Europa's story appears in textual proximity to the *Gigantomachy*, the battle between the giants and the titans. Simon interprets the stone throwers as giants and consequently sees the juxtaposition of Europa's abduction as a function of the text. See Simon, 'Veroli', 285.
  16. *Ibid.*, 296–97.
  17. *Ibid.*, 328–30.
  18. *Ibid.*, 238.
  19. Hans Belting, 'Problemi vecchi e nuovi sull'arte delle cosiddetta "rinascenza Macedone" a Bisanzio', *Corso di cultura sull'arte Ravennate e Bizantina* 29 (1982): 45; Anthony Cutler, *The Hand of the Master: Craftsmanship, Ivory, and Society in Byzantium (9th–11th Centuries)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 243. The stylistic connection to late antiquity was pointed out earlier by Simon, but she sees it as exclusively mediated through manuscripts: Simon, 'Veroli', 287–89.
  20. Cutler, 'Byzantine Boxes', 32–33.
  21. *Ibid.*, 42–46; Cutler, *Hand of the Master*, 240–46.
  22. Cutler, 'Byzantine Boxes', 44–46; Anthony Cutler, "'Ehemals Wien" the Pula Casket and the Interpretation of Multiples in Byzantine Bone and Ivory Carving', *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 41 (1999): 121 (similarly); idem, 'Byzantine Boxes', 44; idem, 'Pula Casket', 121 (similarly).
  23. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 184; Simon, 'Veroli', 296 (thinks that the artists of the Veroli and the Joshua roll looked at a common prototype).

24. Cutler, 'Byzantine Boxes', 46.
25. Cutler, 'Pula Casket', 120–21.
26. Speck, 'Rosettenkästchen', 79–85.
27. Bühl, 'Regelmässigkeit', 35–36.
28. Anthousa Papagiannaki, 'Performances on Ivory: The Musicians and Dancers on the Lid of the Veroli Casket', *Deltion tes Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias* 34 (2013): 301–10.
29. Maguire, 'Nude', 18; Eunice Dauterman Maguire and Henry Maguire, *Other Icons: Art and Power in Byzantine Secular Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 165–66.
30. Maguire, 'Nude', 18. But for a different take, see Simon, 'Veroli', 321.
31. Maguire, 'Nude', 19.
32. Chatterjee, 'Vision, Transformation, and the Veroli Casket', 325–44.
33. Walker, 'Laughing', 263.
34. Previous work in the same direction includes: Belting, 'Problemi vecchi'; Kalavrezou, 'The Cup of San Marco and the "Classical" in Byzantium', 273–84; Walker, 'Bowl', 32–53; Henry Maguire, 'Epigrams, Art, and the "Macedonian Renaissance"', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 48 (1994): 105–15.
35. See, for instance, the analysis in Gloria Ferrari Pinney, 'Myth and Genre on Athenian Vases', *Classical Antiquity* 22.1 (2003): 37–54.
36. On the allegorical meaning of myths, see Diliana Angelova, 'Textile', in *The Eerdmans Encyclopedia of Early Christian Art and Archaeology*, ed. Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017), 581–84.
37. For the deployment of myths to underscore beauty, passion, and marriage and the gendering of mythological characters, see Diliana Angelova, 'Ivory: Mythological Subjects', in *Encyclopedia of Early Christian Art and Archaeology*, ed. Corby Finney, 722–23.
38. As for Byzantine novels, see the preceding article of Messis and Nilsson.
39. For the longevity and preservation of the classical tradition with respect to literature, see Manolis Bourbouhakis, 'Byzantine Literary Criticism and the Classical Heritage', in *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, ed. Anthony Kaldellis and Niketas Sinioglou (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 113–28; Eleanor Dickey, 'Classical Scholarship: The Byzantine Contribution', in *ibid.*, 63–78; Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Greek Culture in the Roman World (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chs. 4 and 5.
40. On the preservation of pagan statuary, see Helen Saradi-Mendelovici, 'Christian Attitudes Toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and

- Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 47–61, esp. 58–60. On the preservation of ancient statuary in other cities, see Ine Jacobs, 'Production to Destruction? Pagan and Mythological Statuary in Asia Minor', *American Journal of Archaeology* 114.2 (2010): 267–303; Douglas Boin, 'A Late Antique Statuary Collection at Ostia's Sanctuary of Magna Mater: A Case-Study in Late Roman Religion and Tradition', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 81 (2013): 247–77. The case for Constantinople is made in the text below.
41. Saradi-Mendelovici, 'Attitudes', 58–60. For destruction, see Cyril A. Mango, 'Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963): 55–83. For transformation, see Liz James, "'Pray Not to Fall into Temptation and Be on Your Guard": Pagan Statues in Christian Constantinople', *Gesta* 35.1 (1996): 12–20.
  42. For examples, see Saradi-Mendelovici, 'Attitudes', 58–59.
  43. For the composition of Constantine's collection, see Sarah Bassett, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
  44. For a discussion of his objectivity, see Diliana Angelova, *Sacred Founders: Women, Men, and Gods in the Discourse of Imperial Founding: Rome Through Early Byzantium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 205–12.
  45. *History*, 649, ed. J. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia, pars prior*, *CFHB* 11.1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 1–635, 637–55. Retrieved from <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/libproxy.berkeley.edu/Iris/Cite?3094:001:1292182>, trans. Paul Magdalino, 'O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates', in *Byzantine Texts in Translation* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 357–62 (overall description of the destruction), 58 (quote).
  46. As has been demonstrated in the scholarship on Anthony Cutler, Ioli Kalavrezou, Henry Maguire, and Kurt Weitzmann. These scholars do not necessarily consider these influences meaningful. See Cutler, 'Byzantine Boxes', 41–42, 46; Kalavrezou, 'The Cup of San Marco and the "Classical" in Byzantium', 167–74; Maguire, 'Nude', 12.
  47. Nathalie de Chaisemartin and Emel Örgen, *Les documents sculptés de Silahdaraga* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations 1984), 18–20 with pl. 12, 13, and 47–8 with pl. 33, Fig. 106. My essay on that statuary group is forthcoming in Hans Belting and Fabian Stroth (eds.), '100 Byzantine Objects' (New York: Thames & Hudson). Compare also one of the gaints to the stone-throwers.
  48. Marie-Hélène Rutschowskaya, *Coptic Fabrics* (Paris: A. Biro, 1990), 120–21 (textiles and also a stone relief); Paul Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, 3 vols., Bollingen Series (New York: Pantheon Books, 1966), 2: 106 (Attendant from the First Seven Steps of the Virgin).



49. For the association of eros with a number of feelings, see also the contribution of Messis and Nilsson in this volume.
50. As above, see Bourbouhakis, ‘Criticism’, 113–28; Dickey, ‘Scholarship’, 63–78; Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, chs. 4 and 5.
51. Williamson, *Carvings*, cat. no. 15.
52. A border of narrow strips carved with *fleur-de-lys* surrounds the central panel. The rosette bands on the other sides represent medallions of a simpler rosette. The left narrow side, closer to the handle, features an additional band, decorated with flowers and a single cluster of grapes. The strips and the panels are attached to the wooden core with pegs, which are either carved or left smoothly polished to blend in with the surrounding decoration.
53. Twenty-four, if the dancers on the lid are counted as Erotes. On this see below.
54. On the rose as the flower of Aphrodite, see below.
55. Zeus and Europa: Moschus, for instance, see below.
56. Anthony Cutler in *The Glory of Byzantium*, ed. Evans and Wixom, 230–31, Fig. 152.
57. For this identification, see Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 14 (he considers other possibilities).
58. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 171.
59. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*. Simon argues for syncretism of Dionysos to Helios. Following Nonnos, she interprets the image as the god of wine going to war with Poseidon on the lion-drawn cart of his grandmother Rhea, to whom he was entrusted by his father, Zeus. See Simon, ‘Veroli’, 318–19. The long staff, which Simon sees as a whip, can be simply a staff decorated with a ribbon; its top slightly bulging part is suggestive of the pine-cone shape of a thyrsus. In the context of the box, it has to be observed that this attribute is much longer than the whip we see in the hands of Eros on one of the longer sides. See Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, pl. 16.
60. So, for instance, a second-century marble sarcophagus in the Walters Art Museum, acc. #23.31. For a picture, see the Walters Art Museum online <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/33305/sarcophagus-with-the-triumph-of-Dionysos/>.
61. The relief, now in Berlin, features various figures also found on the Veroli box: the pair of female felines; a snake coiling out of a basket/cista that recalls the altar with the putto. For the image, see the online database of the Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, acc. no. 850, at <http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=699331&viewType=detailView>.

62. Simon, 'Veroli', 321 (Liebestrunkenheit).
63. Further signs of deliberate linkages come from a drinking bowl found in two places: at the feet of the dancers on the lid (Fig. 3) and hovering in midair between the two Erotes on the short side. This bowl links the short panel to the dance above (Fig. 5).
64. Roger Ling, *Roman Painting* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Figs. 115, 117, 127; Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, 3rd ed. (Mainz: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1976), cat. nos. 66 and 80.
65. Angelova, 'Textile', 2: 584; Angelova, 'Ivory: Mythological Subjects', 719–23.
66. V&A panel: height: 5 cm, length: 13 cm, depth: 0.9 cm, weight: 0.06 kg. Data from the V&A website: link as well as catalogue. V&A, accession number 216-1865. Museum website link <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O84212/the-rape-of-europa-panel-unknown/>. With Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, no. 23, 32–33; Williamson, *Carvings*, 84–85.
67. Weitzmann and Beckwith identified the figures as Maenads: see Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 184; Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 8, pls., 3 and 4.
68. Maguire, see above. For a spiritual reading of Maenads, see Mati Meyer, *An Obscure Portrait: Imaging Women's Reality in Byzantine Art* (London: Pindar, 2009), 222.
69. Simon, 'Veroli', 284.
70. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 129 (but he talks about Pseudo-Oppian).
71. Simon, 'Veroli', 301.
72. Museo nazionale romano, Terme di Diocleziano, Inv. no. 128577. The image can be found on the Alamy website at <http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-sarcophagus-with-dionysiac-ceremonial-procession-on-the-front-and-82512005.html>.
73. Anthousa Papagiannaki, 'Nereids and Hippocamps: The Marine Thiasos on Late Antique and Medieval Byzantine Ivory and Bone Caskets', in *The Legacy of Antiquity: New Perspectives in the Reception of the Classical World*, ed. Lenia Kouneni (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 83.
74. Moschus, *Europa*, 115–24, ed. and trans. *LCL* 28, 460–61. Weitzmann pointed to the connection between this poem and the Veroli box: Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 185.
75. Compare, for instance, the Nereids on the Projecta box, discussed below. See, Kathleen Shelton, *The Esquiline Treasury* (London: British Museum Publications, 1981), pl. 5.
76. Painting from a bath in Ostia, see the American Academy in Rome Library [Photographic Archive], no. 100012.

77. For the image, Wikimedia Commons at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sea\\_thiasos\\_Nereis\\_Glyptothek\\_Munich\\_239\\_front.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sea_thiasos_Nereis_Glyptothek_Munich_239_front.jpg).
78. British Museum Collection online [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=59394&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=59394&partId=1).
79. Claudian, *Epithalamium of Honorius and Maria*, LCL 135, 254–55.
80. Ibid.
81. Compare, for instance, Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, nos. 26, 40, and 57–64. This is a point that I will develop further in my monograph in progress.
82. Ten Zile Uysal et al., *The Gaziantep Zeugma Mosaic Museum/Mozaik Müzesi* (Istanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayinlari, 2016), 106–7. In 1998, thieves stole two-thirds of this exquisite piece: see Jerome Eisenberg, ‘Roman Mosaics Stolen from Zeugma on the Euphrates’, *Minerva* 10, no. 3 (1999): 5; Özgen Acar, ‘Mosaics and Heads of Statues Plundered from Zeugma’, *Culture Without Context* 7 (2000): 5–8.
83. A chest of this type was found in Zeugma; see Elias Khamis, ‘Copper Alloy Objects’, in *Excavations at Zeugma, Conducted by Oxford University*, ed. William Aylward (Los Altos, CA: The Packard Humanities Institute, 2013), 123. For the link between chests and jewels, see also Papagiannaki, ‘Nereids’, 80 with n. 30.
84. Dioskoros of Aphrodito, H5 ‘Encomium on Duke Callinicus’, 23–26 (groom like Dionysus, Ares, Achilles, Bellerophon, etc.), H25 ‘Epithalamium for Athanasius’, 8 (love’s adornment), H21 ‘Epithalamium for Count Callinicus and Theophile’, 9 (love’s adornment, Ariadne, Dionysos, Achilles, Bellephoron, etc.), H5 (‘Dionysus with His Wreathed Revelers’) ed. and trans. Leslie MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito: His Work and His World* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1988).
85. See the preceding note.
86. On the date and for a translation, see *Four Byzantine Novels: Theodore Prodromos, ‘Rhodanthe and Dosikles’—Eumathios Makrembolites, ‘Hysmine and Hysminias’—Constantine Manasses, ‘Aristandros and Kallithea’—Niketas Eugenianos, ‘Drosilla and Charikles’*, trans. Elizabeth Jeffreys, *Translated Texts for Byzantinists 1* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 159–65.
87. Constantine Manasses, ‘Aristandros and Kallithea’, in Jeffreys, *Novels*, 290.
88. ‘For Love and wine, both robbers of human souls, were overwhelming his mind’. (‘Ἔρως γὰρ καὶ οἶνος αὐτῶ τὸν νοῦν ὑπεκύμαινον, ἀνθρωπίνων ψυχῶν ἄμφω λησταί.’), *Narr.* 16.2 (*Prog.* 23), *Niceforo Basilace: Progimnasmī e monodie*, ed. Adriana Pignani (Naples:

- Bibliopolis, 1983), 100. Text retrieved from <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/libproxy.berkeley.edu/Iris/Cite?3087:003:0>; *The Rhetorical Exercises of Nikephoros Basilakes: Progymnasmata from Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, ed. and trans. Jeffrey Beneker and Craig Gibson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 56–59, 59 (quote) (hereafter Nikephoros Basilakes).
89. See above.
90. Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, 2.3.3, ed. and trans. LCL 45, 60–61.
91. *Ibid.*, 2.38.1 (matters of Aphrodite), 4.1 (rites of Aphrodite), 5.15 (mysteries of Aphrodite), 6.16.3, ed. and trans. LCL 45, 130–31, 190–91, 268–69.
92. *Ibid.*, 2.37.8, 2.37.10, ed. and trans. LCL 45, 128–31.
93. See, for instance, a statue of Venus Genetrix in the Louvre, dated to 1st–2nd c. CE, which is considered a copy of an original by Callimachus. Online at the Musée du Louvre, [http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car\\_not\\_frame&cidNotice=855](http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&cidNotice=855).
94. Caroline Vout, *Sex on Show: Seeing the Erotic in Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), Fig. 37. The panel is 7 × 10 cm, British Museum 1902,0917.1. See the BM Collection online at [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=465805&partId=1&searchText=1902,0917.1&page=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=465805&partId=1&searchText=1902,0917.1&page=1).
95. Roger Packman Hinks, *Catalogue of the Greek, Etruscan and Roman Paintings and Mosaics in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1933), nos. 59–61, 89, and 90. The panels are from the Fayûm, Egypt.
96. Further examples of late antique ivory and bone plaques from containers include a plaque with Europa and the bull (acc. no. 71.593), bone plaques with Dionysiac characters (acc. no. 71.20), ivory panel with putti (acc. no. 71.499), Zeus and Ganymede (acc. no. 71.596). See these with images online at the Walters Art Museum website <http://art.thewalters.org/>.
97. Dumbarton Oaks Collection of Byzantine Art, acc. no. BZ.1947.8. For images, see online at <http://museum.doaks.org/Obj30334?sid=10038&x=42878&port=2606>.
98. Medicinal: Kurt Weitzmann, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 3: *Ivories and Steatites* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Collection, 1972), cat. 9, p. 19, pls. VIII–X, color plate I.
99. For the Projecta casket see Shelton, *Esquiline Treasury*, 26–28.
100. Dioskoros of Aphrodito, trans. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, H5 ('Dionysus with his wreathed revelers'), H21, H22 (indirectly).

101. For Projecta's connections to Venus, see Shelton, *Esquiline Treasury*, 27–28; Jaś Elsner, 'Visualising Women in Late Antique Rome: The Projecta Casket', in *Through a Glass Brightly: Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology Presented to David Buckton*, ed. Christopher Entwistle and David Buckton (Oxford: Oxbow, 2003), 30–32.
102. For examples of Middle Byzantine boxes in the shape of truncated pyramids, see Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, nos. 32–33, 40, 47–48.
103. Angelova, *Sacred Founders*, 18.
104. Boston Cameo: Boston Museum of Fine Art collection online <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/cameo-with-livia-holding-a-bust-of-augustus-155690>.
105. Diana E. Kleiner, 'Second-Century Mythological Portraiture: Mars and Venus', *Latomus* 40 (1981): 512–44; Rachel Kousser, 'Mythological Group Portraits in Antonine Rome: The Performance of Myth', *American Journal of Archaeology* 111.4 (2007): 673–91.
106. Marianne Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher: Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1998), 3–12, 118–19; Christopher H. Hallett, *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 B.C.–A.D. 300*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 259–70; Tonio Hölscher, *The Language of Images in Roman Art* (Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
107. Angelova, *Sacred Founders*, 88–92.
108. Mysteries of Aphrodite: Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, 2.38.1 (matters of Aphrodite), 4.1 (rites of Aphrodite), 5.15 (mysteries), 6.16.3, ed. and trans. *LCL* 45, 130–31, 190–91, 268–69.
109. Sappho 2 (Potsherd of the 3rd Century BCE), ed. and trans. *LCL* 142, 56–57.
110. Marriage preparations: Sappho 194 (Himerius, *Orations*), ed. and trans. *LCL* 142, 182–85. God-equal groom: Sappho 31 (Longinus, *On the Sublimity*), 78–79.
111. Sappho 194 (Himerius, *Orations*), ed. and trans. *LCL* 142, 182–85.
112. Claudian, *Epithalamium*, *LCL* 135, 164ff.
113. Claudian, *Epithalamium*, 'Fescennina', I (XI).6–9, 16–17, ed. and trans. *LCL*, 230–31.
114. This instance of Eros riding seahorses provides more evidence, apart from the iconographical point made by Simon, that the figure riding a similar horse on the Veroli box is not necessarily a Nereid, as has been assumed, but simply a playful Eros: Simon, 'Veroli', 314.
115. Among the presents is a box, similar in shape to the Veroli. The gift-giving and adornment of the goddess and the woman unfold under a

- portrait of Projecta and her husband and an evocative inscription, suggesting that the silver box was a present, given to Projecta on the occasion of her wedding.
116. On the power of Eros, see Simon, 'Veroli', 286.
  117. On the power of Aphrodite's girdle (*kestos*), see Il. 14.214–21, ed. and trans. *LCL* 171, 82–83. Basing her reasoning on Nonnos, Simon also offers an astrological explanation. See note 9 above and Simon, 'Veroli', 304–17. Simon argues that the tying of the girdle is an allegory for marriage.
  118. Simon, 'Veroli', 317. For the name of the author and translation of the novel, see Jeffreys, *Novels*, 159. See also Paul Magdalino, 'Eros the King and the King of "Amours": Some Observations on "Hysmine and Hysminias"', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 197–204.
  119. For late antique parallels, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, nos. 66 and 80.
  120. On Homer in Byzantium, see Bourbouhakis, 'Criticism', 120–21; Dickey, 'Scholarship', 72–73. Laughter-loving (φιλομειδής): Il. 4.10, 14.211, ed. and trans. *LCL* 171, 164–65, 82–83 (respectively). Nikephoros Basilakes, *Prog.* 54.4–5, ed. Pignani 222.
  121. See Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 159. Simon interprets the torch in various ways. In the hands of Aphrodite it is the goddess's most important symbol in her astral role—the light-bringing morning star; the torch carried by Eros on the plaque in the V&A Museum signifies the evening star, Hesperos, the leader of the Erotes. See Simon, 'Veroli', 305. When carried by a female figure as on the other long side of the Veroli box, which Simon identifies as Stheneboia, the torch is considered a symbol of a married woman: Simon, 'Veroli', 326; Simon, 'Veroli', 326. See my discussion below.
  122. John Oakley, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 26–27.
  123. OCD, s. v. 'Hymenaeus' and P. Linant de Bellefonds, *LIMC* 5.1 (1990), 583–85; 5.2. 401.
  124. One example among many: Bion, *Lament for Adonis*, 87–90, ed. and trans. *LCL* 28, 514–15.
  125. For the image, see the Theoi Greek Mythology website at <http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/Z12.22.html>, accessed 3.2. 2018.
  126. Also a wedding procession in Weitzmann, *Mythology*, Fig. 114.
  127. Claudian, *Epithalamium, Fescennina*, III (XIII). 3–4, ed. and trans. *LCL*, 236–37.
  128. Dioskoros of Aphrodito, H22 'Epithalamium for Matthew', 14 (Europa), 4 (Ariadne), Daphne (18–19), ed. and trans. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*.
  129. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, H22. and Manasses, 'Aristandros and Kallithea', 288–89.

130. Nikephoros Basilakes, *Ethopoeiae* 25 (*Prog.* 54), ed. and trans. Beneker and Gibson, 306–7.
131. For an allegorical reading, see also Simon, ‘Veroli’, 316–17.
132. Plato, *Republic*, 9.573c, ed. and trans. *LCL* 276, 314–15 (tyrant); Plato, *Symposium*, 186b, ed. and trans. *LCL* 166, 124–25 (universal principle).
133. Ovid, *Amores*, 1.5 (cruel boy), 1.13, ed. and trans. *LCL* 41, 318–19, 320–21 (respectively).
134. Ovid, *Amores*, 1.21–26, ed. and trans. *LCL* 41, 320–21.
135. *Ibid.*, 1.35, ed. and trans. *LCL* 41, 324–25.
136. Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, 4.4, ed. and trans. *LCL* 69, 190–91.
137. Nikephoros Basilakes, *Ethopoeiae* 22.3 (*Prog.* 51), ed. and trans. Beneker and Gibson, 282–83.
138. *Hysmines et Hysminiae*, 5.6 (despot), 2.7 (lad) and 2.9 (army), 2.11 (weapons), trans. Jeffreys 213, 188 and 189.
139. Trans. Jeffreys, 234. ‘Ἄλλ’, ὃ βασιλεῦ Ἔρωσ, πάντων θεῶν βιαιότερε, ὃ ψυχᾶς κατατυραννῶν, ὃ βέλως πέμπων καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς συμμεθελκόμενος καὶ τὰς ψυχᾶς’, *Hysmine and Hysminias* 7.17.5, ed. Miroslav Marcovich, *Eustathius Macrembolites De Hysmines et Hysminiae amoribus libri XI* (Munich-Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 2001): xxiii–xxiv, 1–152. Retrieved from <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.libproxy.berkeley.edu/Iris/Cite:3072:002:135038>.
140. ‘Πανδαμάτωρ, πάντολμε, παντάναξ Ἔρωσ’, *Drosilla and Charikles* 2.135. Greek edition used here: G. Conca, *Nicetas Eugenianus: De Drosillae et Chariclis amoribus*, London Studies in Classical Philology 24 (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1990), 30–221. Retrieved from <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.libproxy.berkeley.edu/Iris/Cite:3095:001:19289>. Also consulted ed. and trans. Burton 26–7 and trans. Jeffreys 365.
141. ‘ὃ γέννημα θηρίων Ἔρωσ’, *Drosilla and Charikles* 2.88, ed. Conca (see note 124 above). Also see ed. and trans. Burton, 26–27 and trans. Jeffreys, 364.
142. ‘σφάττεις, φονεύεις, πυρπολεῖς, καταφλέγεις, πλήττεις, ἀναιρεῖς, φαρμακεύεις, ἐκτρέπεις’. *Drosilla and Charikles* 2.141–42, ed. Conca (see note 124 above). Also see ed. and trans. Burton, 28–29, and trans. Jeffreys, 364 (used here).
143. A&K, trans. Jeffreys, 288–89.
144. For instance, boxes with Eroses: Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, 8–9, 11–12, 21, 26–28, 31–33, 40–41, 43–44, 47–51, 57–66.
145. A rectangular chest filled with coins was found at Zeugma: see Khamis, ‘Copper Alloy Objects’, 123. For the textiles, dowry, and wealth, see Jennifer Ball, *Byzantine Dress* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 8, 59.
146. Sappho 47.2, *LCL* 142 (Maximus of Tyre, *Orations*), 92–93.
147. Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, Prol., ed. and trans. *LCL* 69, 12–15.

148. *Leucippe and Clitophon*, 1.5.5–7, ed. and trans. *LCL* 45, 18–19 (translation slightly amended).
149. “Ἔρως ὁ σοφὸς ἐγὼ καὶ δρᾶμα μελετῶ φιλοτήσιον, Ἔρως ὁ δεινὸς ἐγὼ καὶ καλὸς, ὁ νέος ἅμα καὶ παλαιός, ὁ τοξεύων ἅμα καὶ μειδιῶν, ἵν’ ἦ καὶ τὸ λυποῦν οὐκ ἀνέραστον καὶ τὸ σαῖνον οὐκ ἄλυτον”. *Ethopoeiae* 22.2 (*Prog.* 51), ed. and trans. Beneker and Gibson, 282–82. Transcription, the *TLG*.
150. Arrows of Eros: Claudian, *Epithalamium*, 69–71, ed. and trans. *LCL* 135, 246–49.
151. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 174; Simon, ‘Veroli’, 325; Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 14 (with other options).
152. Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 14. See also Cutler, in *The Glory of Byzantium*, ed. Evans and Wixom.
153. ‘αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν· δ’ ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες. κεῖται καλὸς Ἄδωνις ἐν ὄρεσι μηρὸν ὀδόντι, λευκῶ λευκὸν ὀδόντι τυπεῖς, καὶ Κύπριν ἀνιῆ λεπτὸν ἀποψύχων· τὸ δέ οἱ μέλαν εἴβεται αἷμα χιονέας κατὰ σαρκός, ὑπ’ ὀφρύσι δ’ ὄμματα ναρκῆ, καὶ τὸ ρόδον φεύγει τῷ χεῖλεος· ἀμφὶ δὲ τήνῳ θνάσκει καὶ τὸ φίλημα, τὸ μήποτε Κύπρις ἀποίσει. Κύπριδι μὲν τὸ φίλημα καὶ οὐ ζῶντος ἀρέσκει, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδεν Ἄδωνις ὃ νιν θνάσκοντα φίλησεν. αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν· δ’ ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες. ἄγριον ἄγριον ἔλκος ἔχει κατὰ μηρὸν Ἄδωνις, μεῖζον δ’ ἅ Κυθέρεια φέρει ποτικάρδιον ἔλκος [...] τήνον μὲν περὶ παῖδα φίλοι κύνες ὠρύονται καὶ Νύμφαι κλαίουσιν Ὀρειάδες· δ’ Ἀφροδίτα λυσαμένα πλοκαμῖδας ἀνὰ δρυμῶς ἀλάληται πενθαλέα νήπλεκτος ἀσάνδαλος, αἱ δὲ βᾶτοι νιν ἐρχομέναν κείροντι καὶ ἱερὸν αἷμα δρέπονται. Bion, *Lament for Adonis*, 6–17, 18–22, ed. and trans. *LCL* 28, 506–9.
154. *Ibid.*, 66, ed. and trans. *LCL* 28, 512–13.
155. Beneker and Gibson, ‘Introduction’, in Nikephoros Basilakes, xii.
156. Nikephoros Basilakes, *Ethopoeiae* 22.5 (*Prog.* 51), ed. and trans. 284–85.
157. Similarly, Simon, ‘Veroli’, 325.
158. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 177–78; Simon, ‘Veroli’, 326; Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 14.
159. Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 14.
160. Simon, ‘Veroli’, 326; Weitzmann, *Mythology*.
161. Apollodorus, *The Library*, ed. and trans. *LCL* 121, 150–51.
162. Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 57.
163. Simon accepts the identification of the first man as Hippolytus and argues that the link between the two scenes is the seduction of the women with them, seen as Phaedra and Stheneboia, See Simon, ‘Veroli’, 326.
164. Simon also sees deception, partly through the mask of Eros and partly through the myths, which she interprets differently. See Simon, ‘Veroli’, 331.
165. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 169–74.
166. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 171.



167. Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 98; John Tzetzes, *Allegories of the Iliad*, vol. 37, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), *Prol.* 750–55, trans. Adam J. Goldwyn and Dimitra Kokkini, 56–57.
168. Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 170; Beckwith, *Veroli Casket*, 15; Simon, ‘Veroli’, 331–32 (draws attention to the snake and deceit through the snake). Compare with Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, no. 27a, pl. 13, p. 34.
169. Hygeia was represented on a sixth-century medicinal box from the Dumbarton Oaks Collection in Washington, DC. See Diliana Angelova and Ioli Kalavrezou in *Byzantine Women and Their World*, ed. Ioli Kalavrezou (New Haven: Harvard University Art Museums and Yale University Press, 2003), cat. no. 164, p. 282.
170. Euripides, *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, with Weitzmann, *Mythology*, 169–77.
171. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, whole: 67–69, 82, and 84, fragments: 70–81, 86–87, 90, and 92–93.
172. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, whole: 8–9, 11–12, 21, 26–28, 31–33, 40–41, 43–44, 47–51, 57–66, fragments: 22–25, 30, 34–39, 45, 46.
173. Claudian, *Epithalamium*, ‘Fescennina’, 23, 30–35, ed. and trans. *LCL* 135, 238–39.
174. See, for instance, Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, nos. 67, 68, 69, 82, 84, 86, and 92–93.
175. Especially, Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Kästen*, nos. 67, 68, 69, and 92–93.
176. Speros Vryonis, ‘The Will of a Provincial Magnate’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957): 263–77.
177. Theodore Balsamon, ‘Scholion on Canon 100 of the Quinisext Council (692)’, trans. Cyril A. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents*, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching, (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 234. The edition is available online from Archive.org: ‘Syntagma tōn theōn kai hierōn kanonōn tōn te hagiōn kai paneuphēmōn Apostolōn, kai tōn hierōn oikoumenikōn kai topikōn Synodōn, kai tōn kata meros hagiōn Paterōn’, ed. George A. Rhalles and Michael Potles (Athens: G. Chartophylakos, 1852–1856). Also see Walker, ‘Laughing’, 285–86.
178. Paul Magdalino, ‘The Bath of Leo the Wise’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988): 116–18, and analysis, 97–16.
179. *Ibid.*, 114.



# Stirring up Sundry Emotions in the Byzantine Illuminated Book: Reflections on the Female Body

*Mati Meyer*

[Women] render them [men] softer, more hot-headed, shameful, mindless, irascible, [...] reckless, nonsensical, and, to sum it up, the women take all their corrupting feminine customs and stamp them into the souls of these men.

John Chrysostom, *Subintr.* 10<sup>1</sup>

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For just as the oil feeds the flame of the lamp, so too the company of women kindles the fire of pleasure; and [...] the remembrance of a woman lingers and kindles desire (‘ἐπιθυμία’) [...] Son, do not let the desire for beauty conquer you; and do not entrap it with your eyes or seize it with your eyelids, because a woman entraps the souls of honourable men.<sup>2</sup>

Antiochos Monachos, *Pandecta scripturae sacrae*, 17.32, 52

These citations disclose the well-known Byzantine androcentrism formulated through recurrent stereotyped sociocultural conceptions that were designed to circumscribe women and their bodies in the patriarchal society and to suggest the threat that women and the desire (*epithumia*) for their bodies held for manliness (‘ἀνδρεία’).<sup>3</sup> Gender relations in Byzantium were cadenced by such notions as female passivity, ‘weakness’, ‘feebleness’ and a woman’s submission to male governance. These ideas had their origin in the stereotype of the woman’s ‘natural’ weakness proffered in the legal corpus inherited from late antiquity and particularly the writings of the early Church Fathers. Moreover, patristic texts drew a parallel between a woman’s subordination to man and the submission of all humanity to God, with Eve as a central protagonist in the construction of this universal ideology. The above notions were repeatedly reinforced by imperial and religious institutions in Byzantium.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, desire in Byzantium was characterized by a dual trajectory. On the one hand, it was regarded as a natural phenomenon integral to human life and thus not as evil in itself as long as it led the soul to the love of God.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, it was associated with the demonic sin of the flesh, so its elimination was regarded as an imperative.<sup>6</sup>

In this chapter, I argue that emotions such as pleasure, shame and anger, and the fear of becoming emasculated, which the desire for the female body may have stirred<sup>7</sup> in the readership of illuminated books can be discerned in the signs of the ‘barbarism’<sup>8</sup> inflicted on the images of Eve, Delilah and Judith. I also contend that these signs—erasure, rubbing, scraping and effacing—which were probably motivated by anger, are the tell-tale evidence of a presumed emotional experience and emotive reception of these images on the part of an overwhelmingly male readership.<sup>9</sup> The viewer’s emotional engagement with the images was facilitated through the senses of sight and touch.<sup>10</sup> Both would have enabled the beholder, whether in the secular or

the monastic realm, to respond to the stimulus of the painted female body.<sup>11</sup>

Two features distinguish the present chapter from other studies of ‘barbarism’ in illuminated books. First, I specifically analyse female characters and thus move beyond the scholarship that addresses primarily male figures, and, second, I endeavour to understand the erasure acts in the context of sexuality and gender hierarchy norms, which differs from the interpretation that considers them principally as expressions of devotion and piety.<sup>12</sup>

The overarching question of the male emotional reception of the female’s desirable body is at the core of the present study, which will address questions such as the following: In what ways might the female body and its artistic staging have engendered emotions? Were the readership’s emotions involved in the viewing process gendered? How did the viewers react in response to the emotions the images aroused?

The scope of this study is not devoid of caveats. First, we should bear in mind the probable destruction of many illuminated books, a reality that leaves us with incidental images, thereby obviating any attempt to embark on a systematic and exhaustive examination of the subject. Second, gaps in the history of the manuscripts that are at the basis of this chapter preclude any attempt to identify precisely when the various damages were inflicted or, for that matter, the identity of those responsible for them. However, for present purposes, I have assumed that the damage was done in a Byzantine or post-Byzantine setting before these manuscripts were transferred to later public collections.<sup>13</sup>

To circumnavigate these problems, I have structured this article around several case studies of biblical narratives in the Middle Byzantine illuminated book. Driven by a methodology that exploits image–text, iconographic–comparative, and textual and contextual analyses, this study considers the intersection of emotion and gender mediated through sensorial experience (sight and touch) and memory. I conclude by suggesting that the erasures reflect ingrained Byzantine societal notions associated with the recurrent belief that women can dangerously stamp the male soul and soften it, which demanded the social need to maintain the gender-hierarchical order.

In the scene of the Punishments (Gen. 3:15–20) in the illuminated copy of the *Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos* (Paris, BnF,



Fig. 9.1 The Creation Cycle, *Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos*, Constantinople, 879–82. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 510, fol. 52v (© Bibliothèque nationale de France)

gr. 510; henceforth: Paris *Gregory*), the present state of preservation of the image of Eve is of particular interest. Her head and lower body are heavily rubbed out, as is the head of the serpent encircling the Tree of Knowledge, which faces her; the paint in the figure of Adam seems to be worn by time and use. Contrary to tradition, the first couple (inscribed ΑΔΑΜ [ΕΥ]Α) is wearing the fig-leaf belts; Adam's is intact, but Eve's belt is scraped, which leads the eye to the supposed place of the genitalia (Fig. 9.1).<sup>14</sup>

Based on its portrayal in the sequential Creation cycle, and in spite of the evident damage, one might suggest that Eve's naked figure initially reflected a beautiful, harmoniously proportioned body.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, drawing on numerous representations of Eve in illuminated books, one can argue that the figure exemplifies an ideal of female 'beauty' expressed in delicate and graceful slenderness, small and round swelling breasts and soft facial traits.<sup>16</sup> On the basis of this visual reconstruction, we may assume that a male readership would have acknowledged Eve's beautiful nudity as erotic and thus desirable.<sup>17</sup>

According to the patristic tradition, Eve, through her cooperation with the snake-Satan, was the origin of all that was evil, and her nature and sexuality were thought to be imperfect.<sup>18</sup> It was probably this perspective that the manuscript's patron, Patriarch Photios (858–67, 877–86), attempted to convey in the depiction of Eve in the Paris *Gregory*.<sup>19</sup> Support for Photios's moral approach can be found in an allusion in Gregory's first oration 'On Peace' (Hom. VI) to the snake-Satan that the Creation cycle illuminates,<sup>20</sup> and the link of the first couple's story to the metaphoric 'wall of enmity' ('τὴν ἔχθραν', Eph. 2:15) between God and humanity disclosed in Gregory's homily.<sup>21</sup> The word 'enmity' is important here because it can be traced back to the enmity ('ἔχθρα') that God decreed between Eve and the snake as her punishment (Gen. 3:16).<sup>22</sup> This link finds support in the sinful association of Eve with Satan expressed in the pseudoapocrypha *Vita Adae et Avea*, which may have been the textual source for the illustrated cycle in the Paris *Gregory*.<sup>23</sup>

Apart from being simply leafed through and read, Byzantine-illuminated manuscripts evoked emotional responses in their viewers, and one of those responses was the rubbing off of figures that embodied 'evil', such as images of iconoclasts and demons in Psalters.<sup>24</sup> Inscribed in a similar category of 'evil' doers, one can assume that it was precisely Eve's desirable figure, which embodied traditional ideas associating her with 'evil', which drove the anonymous destroyer to damage it at the description of the moment of the Punishments.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, as understood by David le Breton, the actual damage to the image makes the painted (physical) body and the social body an 'objet concret d'investissement collectif, support de mises en scène et de mises en signes, motif de ralliement ou de distinction à travers les pratiques et les discours qu'il suscite'.<sup>26</sup>

Recent scholarship on the beholder's mental processes as he or she views works of art maintains that emotional responses to visual stimuli may be 'applicable to all periods of painting'.<sup>27</sup> Building on this thesis, one can argue that the erasure of Eve's alluring, yet sinful, sexuality in the Paris *Gregory*, which aroused an understandable sense of pleasure in the male beholder, might also have caused him to experience the negative emotions of shame and embarrassment. Let us not forget that it is precisely the idea of shame, fundamental to the biblical narrative, which is visualised here through the couple's fig-leaf girdles.<sup>28</sup>

The portrayal of Eve in the *Bible of Leo Sakellarios* (Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., Reg. gr. I B; henceforth: *Leo Bible*)<sup>29</sup> or, rather, the damage inflicted on her figure, can further elucidate the nature of the emotional response to the desirable, yet shameful, female body. We see Adam and Eve with the serpent, who, having already given Eve the forbidden fruit, is twined around the Tree of Knowledge.<sup>30</sup> The colour has flaked in many parts of the miniature, but the rubbing of Eve's face and most of her body, down to the knees, and the obliteration of the serpent's head seem too deliberate to be considered coincidental.

The choice to depict only the Fall from the Creation cycle places the emphasis on primordial sin and harmonizes with the part of Leo's poem that frames the miniature: 'The serpent [...] has become envious and is crawling as he addresses Eve in the picture'.<sup>31</sup> As with the image of Eve in the Paris *Gregory*, we cannot exclude the possibility that the near obliteration of her image reflects the reader's sense of shame, stirred by the natural desire for her body, which finds visual expression in the interventional gestural response.

At this point, it may be worthwhile to offer a short explanation of the meaning of shame in Byzantium. According to John of Damascus (c. 675–749), shame, which is one of six subdivisions of fear, is 'due to the perpetration of a shameful act'. Shame is also tied to 'terror', which is 'fear arising from a strong mental impression'.<sup>32</sup> As it was associated with a courageous person, fear was usually male gendered and was generally mentioned in connection with military acts or devotional practices.<sup>33</sup>

In other instances, there might have been fear related to the sight of the female body, as formulated, for example, in a poem by an anonymous contemporary of John Mauropous (c. 1000–1070s): 'To Boumes as he thrashes the naked women [prostitutes], covers their faces with soot, and thus exposes them to public ridicule?' [...] As you conceal what



is uncovered and reveal the hidden parts, do you not secretly fear the watching word of God?'<sup>34</sup>

This citation refers to the well-known *diapompeusis*, that is, the humiliating and defamatory processions of sinners and criminals throughout the city, used in Byzantium as an extreme means of subjecting them to social control.<sup>35</sup> However, what troubles the anonymous poet is not the immoral conduct of sinful women, but the very fact that Boumes transgressed normative social mores regarding the female body. He exposed their private parts, which might have incited forbidden thoughts and unwanted emotions on the part of the onlookers, leading them astray, away from God.

A similar linkage formulated specifically in a gendered perspective is found in the *History* by Leo the Deacon (b. 950). In his account of a certain woman who exposed herself to Nikephoros Phokas's Byzantine troops during the siege of Chandax, Leo dwelt on the fact that her nudity distracted the soldiers from their 'manly activity' of conquering Crete:

[Nikephoros Phokas] advanced against the town. While the general was strengthening the squadron in the van [...] a rather bold and shameless prostitute, acting in a provocative and wanton manner, leaned over the battlements and made certain spells and incantations [...]. That bold woman indicated not only in this way her shamelessness and licentiousness, but she also pulled up her tunic more than was proper, exposing her naked body.<sup>36</sup>

In spite of the differences in their scope, both the anonymous citation and the passage from Leo emphasize the power of female sexuality to impact men morally. In the first instance, it distances them from God, and in the second, it distracts the troops from their 'manly activities',<sup>37</sup> which implicitly threatens their masculinity. The elimination of the disturbing and shameful sight is accomplished either by concealing the face, a sign of humanity, with mud (Boumes), or by putting the body to death, as the *History* continued the story: 'One of the [...] archers drew his bowstring, hit the licentious woman and made her fall to the ground from the tower; she was instantly crushed and breathed out her wretched soul, suffering this piteous fate as retribution for her insolence'.<sup>38</sup> When the distressing source was removed, both Byzantine and Cretan soldiers turned to their manly duties: 'Now the battle broke out fiercely'.<sup>39</sup>



By the same token, one can understand the beholder's erasure of Eve's figure as an attempt to remove the moral threat occasioned by her sexuality and to acquire some control over the shame that its attractiveness aroused, especially when such an image appeared in a religious book.

In other visual instances, one can assume an ideological amalgam of the attraction to female sexuality coupled with fears of emasculation as the motive behind the destruction of such images. A good example is Delilah's encounter with Samson (Judg. 16:4–16:30) in the Paris *Gregory*, which is depicted in the preface to Gregory's twenty-fifth oration 'On Heron the Philosopher'. Samson is lying in the woman's lap asleep while she cuts his hair with a large pair of shears; her face evidences a distinct rubbing (Fig. 9.2).<sup>40</sup>

The figure's effacement may be related to the sexual content of the scene implied here by the sense of intimacy, in spite of the codified features of the couple, and Delilah's luxurious hair falling abundantly on her shoulders.<sup>41</sup> Notable also is the portrayal of Samson as a youth with a ruddy beardless face, hinting at his impending emasculation by Delilah, as the legend accompanying the miniature notes, 'Delilah shears Samson's head' (ΔΑΛΙΔΑ ΕΥΡΙΖΟΥΣΑ ΤΟΝ ΣΑΜΨΩΝ). Contradicting the biblical narrative in which it is the Philistine soldier who cuts Samson's hair (Judg. 16:19), the painter not only placed the blame squarely on Delilah but also figured her 'manly' deed. In fact, the 'masculinization' of Delilah is reinforced in the following scene, where she places a hand on Samson's shoulder, handing him over to his enemies. The visual is once again inconsistent with the Bible (Judg. 16:18–21), as it reflects a kind of militant image of the woman.<sup>42</sup>

It has been suggested that the Samson cycle does not illustrate Gregory's sermon.<sup>43</sup> Yet, one can loosely tie the sin of flesh implied in Samson's intimate encounter with Delilah to Gregory's understanding of what a true philosopher (Heron) stands for: freedom from the shackles of passions and sin.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, Samson pursued sexual pleasure and indulged in immoral practices, ultimately resulting in a weakening of his spirit and the loss of his mighty strength. This weakness marks a departure from the notion that God deserted Samson after Delilah had shorn him of his divine power: 'He knew not that the Lord was departed from him' (Judg. 16:20). The heavy moral burden that Delilah bore for stripping Samson's head of its divine power as it might have been perceived by the readership was translated here into her effaced visage.



Fig. 9.2 Samson Cycle; Martyrdom of Isaiah, *Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos*, Constantinople, 879–82. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 510, fol. 347v (© Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Interestingly, in contrast to the near erasure of Eve's entire body, the anonymous destroyer of Delilah's figure only rubbed off the face. The latter form of damage is comparable to the Roman and Byzantine *damnatio memoriae*, namely the erasure of faces and names which was a way of blotting out a ruler's identity and memory and a means of contesting his authority as well as of controlling and/or suppressing him.<sup>45</sup> In contrast with this *damnatio memoriae*, which was politically or religiously motivated, the erasure of Delilah can be classified as an example of morally inspired act. It served the beholder to eradicate the source of shame and the sexual desire associated with the figure of Delilah. On another level, the damage inflicted on the female head might represent an attempt to 'erase' the character's evil and treacherous behaviour, which rendered the strong man powerless, an act that would have helped the reader overcome his fear of emasculation.<sup>46</sup> The latter suggestion points to the probability that over and above Delilah's sexual appeal, it was her 'manly' character and actions that the reader feared. By punishing (erasing) the powerful figure, he eliminated a factor that disturbed the traditional gender hierarchy norms and reinstated accepted gender limits.

An additional example that further illustrates the suggestion that imagined threats of emasculation engendered gestures of visual 'barbarism' is found in a sequential narrative of Samson and Delilah in the only extant illuminated copy of the *Sacra Parallela* (Paris, BnF, gr. 923; henceforth: *Sacra Parallela*).<sup>47</sup> The cycle is grouped with images of other evil doers under the heading 'On evil, and adulterous, and prostituted women, and those who abound in every kind of vice'.<sup>48</sup>

Samson, scantily covered by a cloth draped over his lower torso to suggest that the sexual act had just taken place, is lying on Delilah's lap, and her visage as is that of the Philistine soldier facing her has been rubbed off. In contrast with the manuscript discussed earlier, here, the female figure is chastely clad, and her head is covered in accordance with Byzantine decorum. Here, following the biblical narrative, the Philistine soldier rather than Delilah is cutting Samson's hair (Fig. 9.3).<sup>49</sup>

Several points tell of the moral threat of emasculation the textual background and the image may have conveyed. First, the idea of weakness and effemination of the powerful male figure is clearly expressed in Samson's response to Delilah in the Bible 'if then I should be shaven, my *strength* will depart from me (ἀποστήσεται), and I shall be *weak* (ἀσθενήσω)' (v. 17; emphasis added).<sup>50</sup> Enhancing this idea is the textual difference between the biblical verses in the *Sacra Parallela* and





Fig. 9.3 Samson Cycle, *Sacra Parallela*, Rome (?), after 943 (?). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 923, fol. 108v (© Bibliothèque nationale de France)

those in the Septuagint; the former cites verse 21 ‘and the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound [him] with fetters of brass’, but omits verse 22,<sup>51</sup> which tells of Samson’s hair, the sign of his divine power and manliness, growing back.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the scanty cover and the fettered hands (in the following scene) are artistic conventions reflecting weakness and humiliation.<sup>53</sup>

Consideration of the manuscript’s Greek monastic readership for which the term *dispassion* (‘ἀπάθεια’), or the suppression and elimination of sexual desire carried special weight is also relevant for the discussion of this illumination.<sup>54</sup> Monks, more than laymen, were expected to fight thoughts and memories regarding the bodily passions in order not to turn aside from seeking God and spirituality. Therefore, looking at images with sexual content would have greatly challenged the monks’ moral core, especially those dwelling on Mount Athos.<sup>55</sup> They were probably familiar with John Chrysostom’s dictum that, ‘the beauty of woman is the greatest snare’,<sup>56</sup> as well as with his subsequent assertion that the blame is ‘not the beauty of woman, but undisciplined gazing! For we should not accuse the objects, but ourselves, [...] [and] the wicked choice of men’.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, monks looking at the figure of Delilah may have considered it appropriate to erase, that is, obliterate, an image that might have tempted them into a willful, sinful gaze. But the interpretation of the image also works in the perspective suggested for the same scene in the Paris *Gregory* (Fig. 9.2); the defacement of Delilah along with that of the Philistine soldier inscribes both figures into the broader aspect of wickedness and treachery.

It is difficult to know whether the illuminated *Sacra Parallela* florilegium was included in the daily refectory reading in the monastery or if availability was limited to the abbot.<sup>58</sup> As it is, we cannot dismiss the possibility that literate or illiterate, at least some of the monks would have had access to the book, as may be inferred from the manuscript’s state of preservation; its pages are trimmed and some of the original folios have been lost.<sup>59</sup>

The mixture of sexual temptation and fear of the female dominance that entailed male effemination may have led to the erasure evident in the story of Judith and Holofernes in the *Leo Bible*.<sup>60</sup> The miniature comprises two scenes that illustrate the framing verse written by Leo: ‘Judith leaving the city of Bethulia and going to Holofernes and cutting off his head’.<sup>61</sup> On the left, she is shown leaving Bethulia, followed

by a maidservant (Judith 10:5). A male servant, not mentioned in the Bible, takes her hand and leads her out of the city. The ‘hand on the wrist’ gesture, which is pregnant with erotic connotations,<sup>62</sup> was probably added to hint at the future sexual encounter of the main protagonists, as implied in the biblical narrative: ‘Now when Judith came and sat down, Holofernes’ heart was ravished with her, and his mind was moved,<sup>63</sup> and he desired (‘κατεπίθυμος’) greatly her company’ (Judith 12:16). On the right, Judith is hovering over Holofernes and hacking ‘with all her might’ (Judith 13:8) through his neck, from which blood is gushing forth. Her defaced figure is the only image in the miniature that is damaged. Leo’s poem framing the miniature echoes the Marian typology of Judith’s character, as she saved her people from the Assyrians just as Mary overcame Satan by bringing forth Christ:

She looks upon deliverance and astonishes her feminine nature (‘τὸν τύπον θῆλυ’), for her sword is as the strength of God. To Israel she brings salvation. And again from woman Christ, the wisdom of God, came forth, bearing his cross as a sword, by which he laid low the panoply of Satan.<sup>64</sup>

Leo’s assertion of Judith’s gender reversal is based on the Greek patristic tradition that characterizes her chiefly as courageous or valiant (‘ἀνδρειοτάτη’).<sup>65</sup> By countering her innate weak nature, the verse puts the female figure on a par with men. However, in spite of the Marian typology, Judith’s ‘manly’ daring and treacherous deed might not have been well thought of by one or another anonymous reader, who attempted to annul or downplay it by obliterating the protagonist’s facial features but not her identity; the inscription ‘Ἡ Ἰου[δίθ]’ appearing above Judith’s figure remained intact.<sup>66</sup> Judith’s figure and the ‘barbarism’ inflicted on her face represent a fascinating example of the ways stereotypes of gender, which were maintained in Byzantium. In spite of her Marian and virtuous associations, she might nevertheless have aroused individual hostility, in this case on the part of the reader who erased her face. This closing example further buttresses this chapter’s dual argument that male readership was uncomfortable with female figures associated with sexuality and, further, women with strong and powerful characters.

At the end of the iconographic comparative and textual analysis, it can be argued that both kinds of destruction—erasure and defacement—did more than disclose the conflicting emotions they aroused in a male readership. They are also evidence of the readership’s cognitive appraisal and

judgment of an imagery that posed a fearful threat,<sup>67</sup> which translated into anger, (‘ὀργή’).<sup>68</sup> The angry response can be understood as a psychological need to indulge in the emotional situation that the viewer was already immersed in as a result of the pleasurable or distressing mood the image created.<sup>69</sup> This emotion was associated with the wrath of God and the ruler’s anger; thus, it is usually stereotyped as a manly emotion, as is fear.<sup>70</sup> If properly directed anger can be transmuted into ‘courage’.<sup>71</sup> Today, we have no way to reconstruct the motivation of the ‘barbaric’ act performed on the image by the individual reader, or whether he would have acknowledged it as ‘barbaric’ or as a rightful ‘punishment’. One way or another, by substituting ‘barbarism’ for the emotional effect of anger, the viewer unmasked his soul as he ruminated on the images of female sexuality, whether from a pleasurable perspective or a perception that it was destructive and dangerous.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the angry gestures aimed at punishing the women by reversing the gender-hierarchical order; sinful and sexually appealing figures such as Eve or ‘manly’ female victimizers such as Delilah and Judith became victims,<sup>73</sup> and the male viewer once again dominated the female body and nature.

The sensorial engagement, both optic and haptic, with the images would certainly have enhanced the experience of delight and/or repulsion at the sight of the figures.<sup>74</sup> Neophytos Enkleistos’s (1213) extract illuminates the role the sensorial system, especially sight and touch, plays in the sexual experience: ‘the arrows of the wicked one enter into the heart at times from seeing, [...] and at times from touch; and while sometimes the damage is caused by the ‘desire for beauty’, at others it is actually done [...] by a touch of the hand’.<sup>75</sup>

The sensory question introduces another relevant component—materiality—which was a major factor in the beholder-object exchange in Byzantium. In the images adduced above, this feature was handled in different ways depending on the possible motivation for the inflicted damage—erasure, rubbing, scraping and effacing—and its desired effects. Thus, the complete scraping of Eve’s image would certainly have caused her sexual appeal to disappear forever. However, the destructive act, ironically, instead of concealing the figure or making it invisible traded the latter’s fleshy humanity for the materiality of the parchment, rendering the ‘absent’ figure, ‘present’.<sup>76</sup> The eye would have been instinctively drawn to the material ‘hole’ making the figure more visually manifest. Moreover, the appearance of the ‘hole’ would have announced Eve’s presence in the reader’s imagination, (‘φαντασία’),<sup>77</sup> and further

aroused his emotions.<sup>78</sup> In this sense, he would have conjured up a vivid image of the figure's obliterated sexuality as if the woman was present on the folio, and that could have revived an emotional trajectory similar to that engendered if she was standing close to him.<sup>79</sup> Chrysostom reasoned that imagination, 'is a faculty of the unreasoning part of the soul. It is through the organs of sense that it is brought into action, [...] and [...] what is imagined and perceived is that which comes within the scope of the faculty of imagination, *phantasia*, and sensation'.<sup>80</sup> In view of the partial damage wreaked upon the figures of Delilah and Judith, one might group their portrayals with sacred images where such distinct features as faces and hands are much more blemished than other parts of the work. Marinis demonstrated that the damage was done to secure miraculous healing from ailments through physical or oral contact with the materiality of the works of art.<sup>81</sup> However, in the images presenting defaced female figures such as Delilah and Judith, 'materiality' should be understood in a different context: it was designed to remove the evil, treacherous and 'manly' character that female figures embodied. The defacement echoes the *Novels* of Leo VI (before 899), where facial mutilation served 'as a sign of [the offender's] wickedness'.<sup>82</sup> As human individuality is defined primarily by the face and including the eyes, obliteration of those features would have attained the desired goal.<sup>83</sup>

Another element to consider is that of memory, which plays a major role in the transmission of medieval textual and visual material.<sup>84</sup> Byzantine authors frequently expressed themselves on the mnemonic value of images, as, for example, the patriarch Photios wrote:

Indeed much greater is the power of sight. [...] It sends the essence of the thing seen on to the mind, letting it be conveyed from there to the memory for the concentration of unfailing knowledge. Has the mind seen? Has it grasped? Has it visualized? Then it has effortlessly transmitted the forms to the memory.<sup>85</sup>

However, unlike Photios and numerous other defenders of images, the present chapter deals with images that have been destroyed. How then is one's memory activated when gazing at an absent form? Jaś Elsner proposes that the mnemonic process includes not only devices such as rereading or memorizing but also the alteration or destruction of the art itself.<sup>86</sup> The latter iconoclastic moves have the power to activate the memory. As Elsner notes, 'the preserved damaged object, in its own



material being, signals both its predamaged state – a different past, with potentially different cultural, political, and social meanings – and its new or altered state'.<sup>87</sup> If we accept Elsner's contention, it is not unreasonable to see the initial gesture, for which the first and foremost end was to obliterate the memory of the female figure responsible for the mixed emotions, achieving the opposite goal, owing to the role *phantasia* plays in the activation of memory.<sup>88</sup> The destroyer of the image leafing through the book upon seeing the 'hole' would have conjured up the scraped image. Possibly, mediated through the eye and the hand, and entering the soul through the activation of *phantasia* and memory, the missing images would have taken part in the structure of a similar emotional experience in subsequent readers.<sup>89</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

At this point, several cautious observations and conclusions can be offered. This chapter began with the question of the emotional reception of the female erotic and sexualized body in the Middle Byzantine illuminated book as reflected in the 'barbarism' inflicted on a series of images. I argued that the sight of such painted figures might have aroused contradictory emotions: sexual desire mixed with shame and/or fear. The chapter represents an attempt to identify the visual elements of the images discussed that may have emotionally impacted a male readership and to capture the emphatic responses to these images. Even if oblique, there are several points that foster the suggestion of the gender identity of this readership: the signs of damage cannot be anything but the tell-tale evidence of male minds thinking about and reacting to female sexuality and the Byzantine idea that evil does not lie with female beauty as such, but, rather, with a man's inability to come to terms with that beauty; the female defiance of male authority and the gendered emotions of shame, fear and anger, which literature usually associated with men.<sup>90</sup>

The readership's emotional engagement with the images involved the processing of external stimuli (seeing the image), the cognitive recognition of the emotion the figures in question raised and the judgment of the appropriate emotional (angered) response to the image translated into 'barbarism'. Even if sometimes neutral in Byzantine culture, the manifestation of positive and negative emotions as expressed in the cases adduced in the foregoing pages is gender specific. Erasures, obliterations and scraping of partial or entire figures are erratic, which obviates

any attempt to offer generalizations on the point of ‘barbarism’ raised in this study. Moreover, there is no tangible proof as to when the erasures were done, or, whether by the original readership or by a later anonymous reader/viewer. Yet the material evidence alleges intentionality in the destruction of the images discussed and does reflect contemporaneous Byzantine perceptions of women.

The ‘barbarism’ discussed herein thematizes the emotion and gender that is played out through the female body. The signs of damage suggest that the original images were interpreted as sexually disruptive and unsettling, or as a threat to manliness. Evidence of attempts to restrain unwanted and disturbing emotions and to re-establish a ‘normative’ male gender identity, whereby the gender-hierarchical order is maintained, these visual traces are aids towards at least a partially apprehension of the way male readers/viewers brought memory and cultural experience to bear on a work of art.

## NOTES

1. ‘Ποιοῦσι μαλακωτέρους, θερμότερους, ἀναισχύντους, ἀνοήτους, ἀκροχόλους [...] ἱταμοῦς, φλυάρους, καὶ ἀπλῶς πάντα τὰ γυναικεῖα ἦθη τὰ διεφθαρμένα φέρουσαι εἰς τὰς τούτων ἐναπομάττονται ψυχᾶς.’ (PG 47, 510); trans. Elizabeth Clark, ‘Ideology, History, and the Construction of “Woman” in Late Ancient Christianity’, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (1994): 155–84 (at 167). In spite of the negative diatribes of the Father on women, Chrysostom’s statement should not be taken at face value given his practice of embellishing his pronouncements with rhetorical devices, including exaggeration and manipulation of cultural stereotypes; Nonna Verna Harrison, ‘Women and the Image of God According to St. John Chrysostom’, in *Dominico Eloquentia—In Lordly Eloquence: Essays on Patristic Exegesis in Honor of Robert Louis Wilken*, ed. Paul. M. Blowers et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eedermans, 2002), 259–79, at 259.
2. “Ὡσπερ γὰρ τὴν τοῦ λύχνου λαμπάδα τρέφει ἔλαιον, οὕτω καὶ τὸν τῆς ἡδονῆς πυρσὸν ἐξάπτει τῆς γυναικὸς συντυχία· καὶ [...] μνήμη γυναικὸς παραμένουσα ἐξάπτει ἐπιθυμίαν [...] Ὅτι μὴ σε νικήσῃ κάλλους ἐπιθυμία· μὴδὲ ἀγρευθῆς σοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, μὴδὲ συναρπαγῆς σοῖς βλεφάρους, ὅτι γυνή, ἀνδρῶν τιμίω ψυχᾶς ἀγρεύει” (PG 89, 1480C).
3. S.v. ‘andreaia’, *LSJ*, [http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0057:entry=a\)ndrei/a](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0057:entry=a)ndrei/a), accessed 21.3.2017. The meaning of *andreaia*, one of four virtues, with justice, temperance and wisdom, was understood in medieval Byzantium as both physical power

- and sexual capability; Charis Messis, *La construction sociale, les 'réalités' rhétoriques et les représentations de l'identité masculine à Byzance*, 2 vols., unpublished thesis (Paris, 2006), 1: 435–40. See also Sarah Ekdawi, Patricia Fann, and Elli Philoygrou, 'Bold Men, Fair Maids and Affronts to Their Sex: The Characterization and Structural Roles of Men and Women in the Escorial Διγενής Ἀκρίτης', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 17 (1993): 25–42, esp. 25–27.
4. Joëlle Beaucamp, 'Le vocabulaire de la faiblesse féminine dans les textes juridiques romains du IIIe au VIe siècle', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 54 (1976): 485–508; Helen Saradi-Mendelovici, 'L'infirmitas sexus' présumée de la moniale byzantine: doctrine ascétique et pratique juridique', in *Les femmes et le monachisme byzantine: Actes du Symposium d'Athènes [1988]*, ed. Jacques Y. Perreault, Elizabeth Koubena, and Maria Toli (Athens: Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, 1991), 87–97; Clark, 'Ideology, History, and the Construction of "Woman"', 168–78. See also Leonora Neville, 'The Adventures of a Provincial Female Founder: Glykeria and the Rhetoric of Female Weakness', in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Lioba Theis et al. (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau 2009), 153–62.
  5. *Epithymia* along with *nous* (reason) and *thumos* (spirit) is one of the three parts of the soul in Platonic thinking (cf. Plato, *Republic*, 434d–441c). Evagrius Pontikos embraced the tripartite model and claimed that each part is necessary for human life; Columba Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus and the "Eight Generic Logismoi"', in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard Newhauser (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2005), 3–34.
  6. 'Desire' and 'sexuality' are interrelated in Byzantine culture, as is the occasional conflation of *eros* and *agapē*, with the demon of unchastity being nearly indistinguishable from the love of God; Virginia Burrus, 'Praying Is Joying: Musings on Love in Evagrius Ponticus', in *Toward a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline*, ed. Virginia Burrus and Katherine Keller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 194–95. For the problematisation of the notion of love in Byzantium, see the chapter by Messis and Nilsson in the present volume. For the art-historical discussion of unchastity, see Mati Meyer, 'Porneia: La représentation du péché de chair dans l'art byzantin', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 52 (2009): 225–43.
  7. 'Stirring up' in Greek may indicate among other meanings an emotional status of being troubled or mulling over; s.v. 'ἀνακαλέω', *Suda*: Alpha, 2068, <http://www.stoa.org/sol-bin/search.pl>, accessed 21.3.2017. The verb 'κινέω' (move, stir up, arouse) can also have

- an obscene sense when used as a euphemism for the sexual act; s.v. κ. 'γυναῖκα', *LSJ*, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/#eid=13177&context=search>, accessed 21.3.2017.
8. The term 'barbarism' indicating the defacement of sacred art in Byzantium was coined by Vasileios Marinis, 'Piety, Barbarism, and the Senses in Byzantium', in *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, ed. Sally Promey (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 321–40. For the erasure of sexual suggestions in late antique art see, e.g., Jaś Elsner, 'Breaking and Talking: Some Thoughts on Iconoclasm from Antiquity to the Current Moment', *Religion and Society* 7 (2016): 131–32.
  9. For the argument that Byzantine culture was produced by and consumed mostly by an elite, educated and perforce male audience, see, e.g., Averil Cameron, *Arguing It Out: Discussion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2016), 9; Athanasios Markopolous, 'Teachers and Textbooks in Byzantium: Ninth to Eleventh Centuries', in *Networks of Learning: Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West c. 1000–1200*, ed. Sita Streckel, Niels Gaul, and Michael Grünbart (Berlin and Münster: LIT Verlag, 2014), 3–16. All but for very few exceptions only men were active in the production of manuscripts, from their commission and conception to their binding: Vassiliki Dimitropolou, 'Giving Gifts to Gods: Aspects of Patronage in Byzantine Art', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 161–70; Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, 'Patronage and Artistic Production in Byzantium During the Palaiologan Period', in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. Sarah Brooks, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006), 76–97. For women as patrons and owners of illuminated books, but possibly not producers, see Annemarie Weyl-Carr, 'Byzantium', in *Dictionary of Women Artists*, vol. I: *Introductory Surveys: Artists, J–Z*, ed. Delia Gaze (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), 14–17.
  10. The study of sensorial experience in the religious realm flourishes. Particularly noteworthy are the collected volumes of Promey, *Sensational Religion* and David Howes (ed.), *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2005). Also of help is the vast bibliography on the sensory-research website, <http://www.sensorystudies.org>, accessed 28.4.2017. The list of Byzantine studies on the senses is too long to cite but especially notable are the following: Marinis, 'Piety, Barbarism, and the Senses' (2014); Charles Barber, *Contesting the Logic of Painting: Art and Understanding in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Bissera V. Pentcheva,

- 'The Performative Icon', *The Art Bulletin* 88.4 (2006): 631–55; Liz James, 'Senses and Sensibility in Byzantium', in *Art: History: Visual: Culture*, ed. Deborah Cherry (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 45–59; Niki Tsironis, 'Representations of the Virgin and Their Association with the Passion of Christ', in *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan: Skira, 2000), 453–63; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 19–23.
11. The Byzantines believed that sight was a tactile medium and that seeing was a tactile experience and a form of corporal touch; Robert Nelson, 'To Say and to See: Ekphrasis and Vision in Byzantium', *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. idem (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 143–68; Liz James, 'Seeing's Believing, But Feeling's the Truth: Touch and the Meaning of Byzantine Art', in *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings, Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou (Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 13–14. On the universal urge to touch the work of art, see 'Desire and Disgust: Touching Artworks from 1500 to 1880', in *Presence: The Inherence of the Prototype Within Images and Other Objects*, ed. Rupert Shepherd and Robert Maniura (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 145–60.
  12. Byzantine works of art, especially Psalters with marginal illuminations, show plenty of evidence for the erasure or effacement of historical figures and stock figures such as iconoclasts, heretics and demons; Kathleen Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-Century Byzantine Psalters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Also, traces of damage inflicted on the work of art reflect a recurrent habit to secure miraculous healing from ailments through the materiality of the work; Marinis, 'Piety, Barbarism, and the Senses', 321–40.
  13. See Appendix: Illuminated Manuscripts.
  14. Fol. 52v (PG 35, 733C, 744C); Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 121–24, 308–11, Fig. 10. The cycle contains the following scenes: The Creation of Adam; The Creation of Eve; The Fall; Adam and Eve Pushed Out of Paradise; The Expulsion from Paradise; Adam and Eve after the Expulsion. Owing to its poor state of preservation, viewing of the manuscript has been banned since before World War II. However, a digitised version of the work now offers an excellent tool for a close study of the miniatures. See below, Appendix: Illuminated Manuscripts.
  15. The term 'nudity' was coined by Kenneth Clark in his much disputed book, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), to denote erotic and aesthetic nakedness. The discussion of

- 'nudity' is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice it to mention that its visualisation in Byzantium is nuanced and variegated, and depends greatly on the medium, the period, the visual tradition in which the artist was trained, and the intended audience or readership: Alicia Walker, 'Ethical Reflections on Female Sexuality as Seen through Byzantine Secular Art', paper delivered in the session 'Representing the Sexuality of Women in Medieval Europe and Byzantium' at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds, July 14, 2010; Eunice Dauterman Maguire and Henry Maguire, *Other Icons: Art and Power in Byzantine Secular Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 97–120; John Hanson, 'Erotic Imagery on Byzantine Ivory Caskets'; Barbara Zeitler, 'Displays of Nudity in Byzantium', in *Desire and Denial in Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-First Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, March 1997*, ed. Liz James (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), 171–84, 185–201, respectively.
16. See, for example, Eve's representation in the illuminated copy of *The Heavenly Ladder of John Klimax*, Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 394, fol. 78r (Rupert J. Martin, *The Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954], 68–69, Fig. 106), and in the two copies of the *Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos*: Paris, BnF, gr. 1182, fol. 47r (Henry Omont, *Miniatures des homélies sur la Vierge du moine Jacques [MS grec 1208 de Paris]* [Paris: Bulletin de la Société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures, 1927], 13, pl. V) and Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 1162, fol. 33r (Irmgard Hutter and Paul Canart [eds.], *Das Marienhomiliar des Mönchs Jakobos von Kokkinobaphos. Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1162* [Zurich: Belser Verlag, 1991], 30–31). I discuss the aesthetic values of female 'beauty' in a forthcoming study. It should be cautioned that female sex markers are not necessarily found in all manuscripts, and consequently, the present discussion cannot be understood as an overall generalisation.
  17. For exegetes such as John Chrysostom, Eve's nudity was a sign of erotic desire, *On Epist. ad Ephes. Hom. XIX* (PG 62, 135B-C); David C. Ford, *Men and Women in the Early Church: The Full Views of St. John Chrysostom* (South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press), 28–35.
  18. Catia Galatarriotou, 'Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1984–1985): 60–62.
  19. On the likely conceptual contribution of Photios to the visual program see Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 201–38.
  20. *Hom. VI*, 10; Marie-Ange Calvet-Sebasti (ed.), *Grégoire de Naziance: Discours 6–12, SC 405* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1995), 146–47; cf. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 121–22.

21. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 221.
22. S.v. 'ἔχθρα', *LBG*, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lbg/#eid=1&context=lsj>, accessed 21.3.2017. The term may also mean to hate or to be hostile to someone; s.v. 'ἔχθραίνει'; Suda: Epsilon, 4025, <http://www.stoa.org/sol-bin/search.pl>, accessed 21.3.2017.
23. *VitAd* xix, 1–3; *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, ed. Robert Henry Charles, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 2: 146.
24. See, e.g., the defacement of the wild-haired iconoclastic John the Grammarian, the iconoclastic patriarch of Constantinople (837 and 843) that whitewashes the icon of Christ in the Chludov Psalter (c. 850–875, State Historical Museum, Moscow, fol. 67r; Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 30–31). Or the invariable deliberate rubbing of the devil in the *Two Meetings in Heaven* (Job 1: 61–12), which appears in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts of Job; Stella Papadaki-Oekland, *Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts of the Book of Job: A Preliminary Study of the Miniature Illustrations, Its Origin and Development* (Athens: Brepols, 2009), 76–87, Figs. 45–64.
25. However, in many instances, Eve's depictions are intact, possibly on account of the figure's positive Marian typology; Mati Meyer, 'Eve's Nudity: A Sign of Shame or a Precursor of Christological Economy?' in *Between Judaism and Christianity: Art Historical Essays in Honour of Prof. Elisabeth (Elisheva) Revel-Neher*, ed. Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 243–58.
26. David le Breton, *Du silence* (Paris: Métailié, 1997), 96.
27. Eric R. Kandel, *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind and Brain from Vienna 1900 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 2012), xvi. Kandel's book is representative of the current teaming of cognitive psychology (the science of mind) with neuroscience (the science of the brain), and the disciplines of neuroscience and humanities (literature and art) attempting to understand the human mind in biological terms; see there, 223–80. This neuroscientific intervention is not universally acclaimed. See, e.g., the critical assessment questioning its casual, unsystematic nature by Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*, trans. Keith Tribe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 219–50, esp. 230–31.
28. *VitAd* xx; Charles, *The Apocrypha*, 2: 146. For this idea see, e.g., Gregory of Nyssa for whom the fig leaves are an ugly and shameful covering; *In Baptismus Christi* (PG 46, 600A).
29. See Appendix: Illuminated Manuscripts.
30. Fol. IIv; Suzy Dufrenne and Paul Canart, *Die Bibel des Patricius Leo: Codex Reginensis Graecus I B*, 2 vols. (Zürich: Belser, 1988), 16–18; Paul Canart, 'Notice Codicologique et Paléographique', in *La Bible*



*du Patrice Léon: Codex Reginensis Graecus*1, *Commentaire codicologique, paléographique, philologique et artistique*, ed. Paul Canart, Studi e testi 463 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2011), 9–13; Thomas F. Mathews, ‘The Epigrams of Leo Sacellarios and an Exegetical Approach to the Miniatures of Vat. Reg. Gr. 1’, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43.1 (1977): 111–18; Paul Canart, ‘Le Vaticanus Reginensis graecus 1 ou la province à Constantinople’, in *Études de paléographie et de codicologie*, ed. Paul Canart, Maria Luisa Agati, and Marco D’Agostino, Studi e testi 451, 2 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2008), 2: 901–06. I am grateful to Kelsey Eldridge for allowing me to read her unpublished MA thesis, ‘*Κτεῖτορ* and Synthesis: Epigrams, Miniatures, and Authorship in the Leo Bible’, University of Washington, 2014. For the image, see the online database of digitized manuscripts of the Vatican Library, at: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Reg.gr.1.pt.B](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.gr.1.pt.B).

31. The full inscription reads: ‘Τὸν χρόν ὁ τῆς γῆς τὴν ὑπαρξην ἀχρόνως/ κ(αὶ) τὸν πόλον ἄνωθεν ὡς δέρριν φέρων/ ὑπὸ χρόνον τίθησι+ἐν μέσῳ,/ ζ[ῶ]ν λαλητὸν ἐκπρεπῶς διαπλάσας./ ὄφης δὲ λυπὸν ε[... Μωσῆ]ς ὡς γράφει,/ φθονήσας ἔρπει προσλαλῶν τῇ εἰκόνι./’ (‘He who holds timelessly the existence of the earth and heaven above like a leather curtain has placed dust in the midst, within time, having excellently fashioned it into a living being endowed with speech. The serpent, however, as Moses writes, has become envious and is crawling as he addresses Eve in the picture’); trans. Cyril Mango, ‘Epigrams’, in Canart, *La Bible du Patrice Léon*, 68.
32. *De fide orthodoxa*, II, XV; *St. John of Damascus: Writings*, trans. Frederic H. Chase, FC 37 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1958), 240–41. The theological formulation echoes the Aristotelian view according to which fear is defined as ‘a pain or disturbance arising from a mental (presentation or) impression of coming evil, destructive or painful’ (*Rhetoric* 2.5, 1382a21–2); *Aristotle: Rhetoric, Volume Two*, ed. Edward Meredith Cope and John Edwin Sandys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 59.
33. David Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Greek Literature* (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 134–35; Savvas Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium: 1204–1453* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 27, 102, 120, 166, 174, 207; Ioannis Papadogiannakis, ‘Dialogical Pedagogy and the Structuring of Emotions in Maximus Confessor’s *Liber Asceticus*’, in *Dialogues and Debates from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium*, ed. Averil Cameron and Gaul Niels (London: Routledge, 2017), 94–104. On fear and shame, see also Martin Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. James, 123–34. Specifically on the emotion of fear, see Radivoj Radic, *Strah u poznoj Vizantiji (1180–1453)*



- (*Fear in Late Byzantium*) (Belgrade: Evoluta, 2000); C. Seban, 'La peur à Byzance aux 13-14s', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32.1 (1982): 187–93.
34. "Εἰς τὸν Βουμῆ δαίροντα τὰς γυναικας γυμνὰς καὶ πληροῦντα τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν αἰθάλῃς καὶ οὕτω δημεύοντα." [...] Τὰ δῆλα κρύπτων καὶ τὰ κρυπτὰ δεικνύων, κρυπτῶς ἐπόπτῃν οὐ φοβῆ θεὸν λόγον,' cf. Spyridon Lampros, 'Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524', *Neos Hellenomnemon* 8 (1911): 6–7; cf. with trans. by Paul Magdalino, 'Cultural Change? The Context of Byzantine Poetry from Geometres to Prodomos', in *Poetry and Its Contexts in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, ed. Floris Bernard and Kristoffel Demoen (London and New York: Routledge), 19–36, at 26.
35. Messis, *La construction sociale*, 422–28.
36. 'Κατὰ τοῦ ἄστεως ἤλαυνεν. ἐν ᾧ δὲ ὁ στρατηγὸς τὴν ἴλην κατὰ μέτωπον ἐκρατύνετο [...] γύναιον ἐταιρικόν, ἀκκιζόμενόν τε καὶ θρυπτόμενον, ἰταμὸν ἐπιεικῶς τυγχάνον καὶ ἀναιδές, τῶν προμαχεῶνων προκύπτων, γοητείας ἐποιεῖτο τινας καὶ ἐπωδάς. [...] οὐ ταῦτη δὲ μόνον τὸ ἰταμὸν ἐκεῖνο γύναιον τὸ ἀναιδές καὶ ἀκόλαστον ἐπεδείκνυτο ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν χιτωνίσκον παρὰ τὸ μέτριον ἀνασσευρκὸς καὶ ἀπογυμνοῦν τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος [...];' *History*, II.6; Charles Benoit Hase and Friedrich Jacobs (eds.), *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*, *CSHB* 30 (Bonn: Weber, 1828), 24; trans. Alice-Mary Talbot and Denis F. Sullivan (eds.), *The History of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 41 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2005), 76–77.
37. Although the Arab custom of having women on the battlefield to exhort and shame men, often with sexual comments, into fighting bravely, seemingly here the prostitute offered her naked body to weaken the Byzantines, not exhort them; *ibid.*, 77, fn. 37.
38. 'καὶ δὴ τις τῶν [...] τοξοτῶν, τὴν νευρὰν ἐντεινάμενος, βάλλει τὸ ἀκόλαστον γύναιον, καὶ χαμαιρρίφες τῶν πύργων κατήνεγκε, διαβράγην αὐτίκα, καὶ τὸ ψυχίδιον ἀποφυσῆσαν, καὶ τίσιν τῆς ὕβρεως τὸν οἰκτρὸν ἐπισπασάμενον ὄλεθρον'; *History*, II.6; *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*, Hase and Jacobs, 24; trans. *The History of Leo the Deacon*, Talbot and Sullivan, 77.
39. 'ἄρτι δὲ τῆς μάχης καρτερᾶς ἀναρρίπισθείσης'; *History*, II.6; *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*, Hase and Jacobs, 24; trans. *The History of Leo the Deacon*, Talbot and Sullivan, 77.
40. Fol. 347v. The cycle includes: (first tier) the slaying of the thousand Philistines; Samson drinks from the jawbone; (second tier): Delilah cutting Samson's hair; Samson blinded by the Philistines; Samson takes down the walls of Gaza. The lower and third tier depicts the martyrdom of Isaiah. The folio was probably placed incorrectly later: Brubaker,

*Vision and Meaning*, 93–95, 179–84, Fig. 35. Note that Brubaker had also acknowledged the intentional damage; *ibid.*, 179. In contrast to the Creation cycle that emerges in late antique art, the episode of Samson congressing with Delilah probably does not appear in Byzantine art prior to ninth century. The only known examples are found in the fifth- or sixth-century mosaic in Mopsuestia (Ernst Kitzinger, ‘Observations on the Samson Floor at Mopsuestia’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 [1973]: 133–44) and the floor mosaic recently uncovered in the Galilean synagogue at Huqoq (Jodi Magness et al., ‘Huqoq [Lower Galilee] and Its Synagogue Mosaics: Preliminary Report on the Excavations of 2011–2013’, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 27 [2014]: 337–55). For a discussion of later Byzantine images see Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 180–82.

41. In Byzantine art, long, loose female hair often served as a metonym of immoral sexual conduct; Mati Meyer, *An Obscure Portrait: Imaging Women’s Reality in Byzantine Art* (London: Pindar, 2009), 275–78.
42. Diverging from the biblical narrative, Josephus noted that Delilah was a harlot, who cut Samson’s hair; Josephus Flavius, *Jewish Antiquities* V, 8. 11; vol. V: *Jewish Antiquities Books V–VIII*, trans. Henry St. John Thackeray and Ralph Marcus, 9 vols., *LCL* 490 (London: Heinemann, 1934; repr. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 140–41.
43. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 179–84.
44. Gregory, *Hom. XXV*; *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: Select Orations*, trans. by Martha Vinson (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 157–74. See also Brubaker’s proposition that the insertion of the Samson cycle was Photios’s attempt to flatter Basil I, who received the manuscript, as his strength as a youth was famous, as was his ultimate success in reaching the throne in spite of many setbacks; Brubaker, *Meaning and Vision*, 184.
45. For the religious-driven *damnatio memoriae*, see Bente Küllerich, ‘Defacement and Replacement as Political Strategies in Ancient and Byzantine Ruler Images’; Anne Karahan, ‘Byzantine Iconoclasm: Ideology and Quest for Power’, in *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. Marina Prusac and Kristine Kolrud (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 57–73, 75–94, respectively, with up-to-date bibliography. For Roman times when *damnatio memoriae* was employed for political purposes, see, e.g., Eric R. Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation: Damnatio Memoriae and Roman Imperial Portraiture* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004); Harriet I. Flower, *The Art of Forgetting: Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman Political Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

46. Defacing Roman imperial women for their adulterous conduct was a well-known practice; Diana E. E. Kleiner, 'Now You See Them, Now You Don't: The Presence and Absence of Women in Roman Art', in *From Caligula to Constantine: Tyranny and Transformation in Roman Portrait Sculpture*, ed. Eric R. Varner and Sherramy D. Bundick (Atlanta, GA: Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2000), 47–57.
47. See below, Appendix: Illuminated Manuscripts.
48. 'Περὶ γυναικῶν πονηρῶν καὶ μοιχαλίδων, καὶ πορνεουσῶν, καὶ πάσης κακίας πεπληρωμένων'; Lit Γ, tit. XII (PG 95, 1317–320).
49. Fol. 108v; Judg. 16:17–21; Kurt Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela: Parisinus Graecus 923*, Studies in Manuscript Illumination 8 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 69, Figs. 99, 101. The additional scenes on the folio are as follows: Samson blinded, one golden bar shackling his ankles and another binding his wrists behind his back as, stripped to his waist, he is being led by the Philistine soldiers to the prison of Gaza and Samson in the prison in Gaza. The sexual undercurrents of this iconography are found later in some manuscripts. See, e.g., the twelfth-century Octateuch (Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 746, fol. 494v) and the thirteenth-century Octateuch (Mount Athos, Vatopedi Monastery, Ms. 602, fol. 443v); Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs: The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint 2*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 294, Figs. 1525–526.
50. The text of the *Sacra Parallela* cites Judg. 16: 15–21 (PG 95, 1317–320): 'And Dalida said to Samson, "How sayest thou, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me? This third time thou hast deceived me, and hast not told me wherein is thy great strength." And it came to pass as she pressed him sore with her words continually, and straitened him, that his spirit failed almost to death. Then he told her all his heart, and said to her, "a razor has not come upon my head, because I have been a holy one of God from my mother's womb; if then I should be shaven, my strength will depart from me, and I shall be weak, and I shall be as all other men"'. ('Ἔϊπε δὲ Σαμψῶν Δαλιδᾶ. "Πῶς λέγεις, ὅτι Ἥγάπηκά σε, καὶ ἡ καρδία σου οὐκ ἔστι μετ' ἐμοῦ; τοῦτο τρίτον ἐπλάνησάς με, καὶ οὐκ ἀπήγγειλᾶς μοι ἐν τίνι ἡ ἰσχὺς σου ἢ μεγάλη". Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε κατειργάσατο αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτῆς πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, καὶ ἔστενοχώρησεν αὐτὸν, καὶ ὀλιγοψύχησεν ἕως τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀπήγγειλεν αὐτῇ πᾶσαν τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ "Σίδηρος οὐκ ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν μου, ὅτι Ναζιραῖος Θεοῦ εἰμι ἀπὸ κοιλίας μητρὸς μου. Ἐὰν οὖν ξυρήσωμαι, ἀποστήσεται ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἡ ἰσχὺς μου, καὶ ἀσθενήσω, καὶ ἔσομαι ὡς πάντες ἄνθρωποι").
51. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, ed. Lancelot C. L. Brenton (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001, 9th ed.).

52. Anthropologically, body hair and beard symbolize the male organ, and the hair connotes sexual activity; Edmund R. Leach et al. (eds.), *L'unité de l'homme et autres essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), 335–37, 352.
53. See, e.g., the execution of three anonymous martyrs further on in the *Sacra Parallela*, fol. 38v; Weitzmann, *Sacra Paralla*, 220, pl. CXXXI, Fig. 593; Lit A, tit. XXXIII (PG 95, 1240 [=tit. XXXI] and 8, 1284). Note that in Byzantine culture, hair and vestments are traditional symbols of the masculine appearance; Messis, *La construction sociale*, 1: 389–418.
54. *Apatheia* does not always have the same meaning. Thus, for Clement of Alexandria, the word is equivalent to love (‘ἀγάπη’); Eric F. Osborn, *Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 68, 73–80. Later on, Evagrius Pontikos considered *apatheia* as freedom from emotion and integral to human life as a means to reach God and spirituality; Antoine and Claire Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique: traité pratique ou le Moine*, SC 170 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 98–112; Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 360–62. On *apatheia* in Byzantine thinking see also Alexander P. Kazhdan, ‘Byzantine Hagiography and Sex in the Fifth to Twelfth Century’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 131–43 (at 131).
55. Without contending that the ninth-century manuscript was always in a monastic library, it can, nevertheless, be securely tied to one of the monasteries of the Holy Mountain. A note on the margin of fol. 2r from the year 1654 by Arseniy Sukhanov, a Russian monk from the Trinity Lavra of Saint Sergios, in the vicinity of Moscow, mentions that he has consulted the manuscript; Marina Kurysheva, ‘Помета Арсения Суханова в греческой рукописи Paris. gr. 923 из Французской Национальной библиотеки (Arseniy Sukhanov’s Note in the Greek Manuscript [BnF, Paris. gr. 923] from the French National Library)’, in *Universitas historiae: Сборник статей в честь*, ed. Pavel Y. Uvarov (Moscow: Институт всеобщей истории, 2016), 473–77. I am indebted to Dr. Irina Oretskaya for drawing my attention to this article. I also want to thank Dr. Emma Maayan-Fanar for having translated this article for me. For more on the history of the *Sacra Parallela*, Appendix: Illuminated Manuscripts.
56. ‘Παῖς μείστη κάλλος γυναικός’; John Chrysostom, *Hom. XV, Concerning the Statues* 10 (PG 49, 158); *St. Chrysostom: On the Priesthood; Ascetic Treatises; Select Homilies and Letters; Homilies on the Statues*, trans. W. R. W. Stephens, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1889), 9: 264.
57. ‘μᾶλλον δὲ οὐχὶ κάλλος γυναικός, ἀλλ’ ἡ ἀκόλαστος ὄψις μὴ γὰρ δὴ τὰ πράγματα διαβάλλωμεν, ἀλλ’ ἡμᾶς καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν ῥαθυμίαν’; (PG 49, 158); John Chrysostom, *Hom. XV, Concerning the Statues*

- 10 (PG 49, 158); *St. Chrysostom*, trans. W. R. W. Stephens, 9: 264. On the lively, reinvigorated cultural exchanges between Rome and Constantinople, especially from 843 on, see, e.g., John Osborne, ‘Rome and Constantinople in the Ninth Century’, in *Rome Across Time and Space: Cultural Transmission and the Exchange of Ideas, c. 500–1400*, ed. Claudia Bolgia, Rosamond McKitterick, and John Osborne (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 222–36.
58. For monastic reading habits, see Mary Cunningham, ‘Messages in Context: The Reading of Sermons in Byzantine Churches and Monasteries’, in *Images of the Byzantine World*, ed. Lymberopoulou, 93.
59. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 6–7.
60. Fol. 383r; Dufrenne and Canart, *Die Bibel*, 42–44. For the image, see the online database of digitized manuscripts of the Vatican Library, at: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Reg.gr.1.pt.B](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.gr.1.pt.B).
61. ‘ἡ Ἰουδεῖθ ἐξεληθοῦσα τῆς πολέως Βετουλοῦα / κ(αὶ) ἀπελθοῦσα πρ(ὸς) Ὀλοφέρνην κ(αὶ) ἄρασα τῆν κεφαλῆν αὐτοῦ’; Mathews, ‘Epigrams of Leo’, 132.
62. Meyer, *An Obscure Portrait*, 263–65.
63. The Septuagint reads ‘soul’ (‘ψυχὴ’) and not ‘mind’.
64. ‘σκοπεῖ τὸ λύτρον καὶ ξενίζου τὸν τύπον θῆλυ. / ξίφος γὰρ ὧδε καὶ Θεοῦ σθένος. τῷ Ἰσραὴλ τίθησι τῆν σωτηρίαν. / ἐκ θήλεως αὐθις δὲ Θ(εο) ὃ σοφία Χριστὸς προῆλθε σταυρὸν ὡς ξίφος. / φέρων, δι’ οὗ Ζατᾶν καθεῖλε τῆν πανοπλιάν’; Mathews, ‘Epigrams of Leo’, 132–33.
65. John Chrysostom, *In Psalmum LXXV* (PG 55, 595), Didymos the Blind, *Commentary on Zecharias 8*; trans. Robert C. Hill, *The Fathers of the Church* 111 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 164; cf. Agnethe Siquans, ‘Die Macht der Rezeption: Eckpunkte patristischer Juditinterpretation’, in *Macht – Gewalt – Krieg im Alten Testament: gesellschaftliche Problematik und das Problem ihrer Repräsentation*, ed. Irmtraud Fischer et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2013), 177–78. For Judith’s characterization as ‘wise’ see idem, *ibid.*
66. Another image of a treacherous woman, Jael, who killed Sisera by hammering a tent peg into his temple (Judg. 4:17–19), was subject to similar ‘barbarism’; her whole body is rubbed off in the Vatopedi *Octateuch* (Ms. 602, fol. 412r); Weitzmann and Bernabò, *Octateuchs*, 276, Fig. 1431.
67. Emotion requires ‘attention directed toward the eliciting stimulus, cognitive appraisal of the meaning and possible implications of the stimulus’, consequently involving the capability to judge the targeted object; Panteleimon Ekkekakis, *The Measurement of Affect, Mood, and Emotion/Emotional: A Guide for Health-Behavioral Research* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 41. Related is the psychological understanding that emotional experience implies ‘a state of consciousness;’ Stephanie A. Shields, ‘Thinking About Gender, Thinking

- About Theory: Gender and Emotional Experience’, in *Gender and Emotion: Social Psychological Perspectives*, ed. Agneta Fischer (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 2000), 3–23 (at 7).
68. John of Damascus, picking on the Aristotelian understanding of anger, sees it as emotional distress; *De fide orthodoxa*, II, XVI; *John of Damascus*, trans. Chase, 241.
69. Psychological research assumes that, ‘Moods seem to lower the threshold for arousing the emotions [...]. In an irritable mood people construe the world around them in a way [...] that permits, if not calls for, an angry response. It is as if the person is seeking an opportunity to indulge the emotion relevant to the mood’; Paul Ekman, ‘Moods, Emotions, and Traits’, in *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions*, ed. Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 56–58, at 57.
70. Anger is listed by Evagrius among the eight capital sins; Guillaumont and Guillaumont, *Évagre*, 63–94; Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind*, 358–39. For discussion of anger, see also Hinterberger, ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, 132–33. For a female perspective on this emotion, see Andriani Georgiou’s essay in this volume while for a male viewpoint, see Stavroula Constantinou, ‘Angry Warriors in the Byzantine War of Troy’, in *Emotions Through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Douglas L. Cairns et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), forthcoming.
71. See, e.g., Gregory of Nyssa, *Philokalia*, V.2.334; *The Philokalia*, ed. G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), 573. See also Paul M. Blowers, ‘Hope for the Passible Self: The Use and Transformation of the Human Passions in the Fathers of the *Philokalia*’, in *The Philokalia: A Classic Text of Orthodox Spirituality*, ed. Brock Bingaman and Bradley Nassif (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 216–29 (at 219 and 224).
72. See, e.g., Lellia Cracco Ruggini, ‘La sessualità nell’etica pagano-cristiana’, in *LIII Settimana del CISAM*, I (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2006), 1–38. For an art-historical discussion of female sexuality, see Mati Meyer, ‘Theologizing Desire: Bathers in the *Sacra Parallela* (Paris, BnF, gr. 923)’, *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 5 (2014): 25–57. Special Issue: *Female Sexuality*, edited by Sherry Lindquist and Mati Meyer. For male sexuality in Byzantium see, Mesis, *La construction sociale*, 1: 179–96.
73. Violence towards women in Byzantium as a means of enforcing and maintaining social norms such as female weakness and submission was a frequent phenomenon; Charis Mesis and Anthony Kaldellis, ‘Conjugal Violence and the Ideological Construction of Byzantine Marriage’, *Limes Plus: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 2 (2016): 21–31.

74. For general studies on the subject, see, e.g., Mark Paterson, *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007; repr. 2013); Constance Classen, *The Book of Touch* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005); *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), esp. 1–21. For the place of touch in art, see Geraldine A. Johnson, ‘Touch Tactility and the Reception of Sculpture in Early Modern Italy’, in *A Companion to Art Theory*, ed. Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (Oxford, UK and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 61–74.
75. ‘Καὶ γὰρ τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ ποτὲ μὲν ἐξ ὀράσεως [...] ποτὲ δὲ ἐξ ἀφῆς εἰσδύουσι τῇ καρδίᾳ· καὶ νῦν μὲν τιτρώσκειται τις κάλλους ἐπιθυμίᾳ, νῦν δὲ [...] ἄρτι δὲ τῇ ἀφῆ τῆς χειρός’; Neophytos Enkleistos, *Scr. Eccl. Decem homiliae*, Hom. V.3.7 (TLG: 3085.004); Ioannis E. Stephanes et al. (ed), *Ἁγίου Νεοφύτου τοῦ Ἐγκλείστου Συγγράμματα*, vol. 1: *Δέκα λόγοι περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐντολῶν* (Πάφος: Ἱερά Βασιλικὴ καὶ Σταυροπηγιακὴ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Νεοφύτου, 1996), 68.
76. Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone, 2011), 25–33, esp. 31–33.
77. I use the term here in the sense of the imaginative power of the soul, which contains its knowledge within the knower himself. For the Byzantine definition of *phantasia*, see *Suda*: Phi 84, <http://www.stoa.org/sol-bin/search.pl>, accessed 30.4.2017.
78. David Konstan, *Pity Transformed* (London: Duckworth, 2001), 38–40. In this sense, the mental and affective process follows Aristotle: Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, University Library, Scholarly Publishing Office, 2004), 28–33.
79. Even if absent, the initial image of the female body was created by imitation of this or another prototype. Consequently, it would have been understood in accordance with the Byzantine theory of images as being truthful to its original, that is, to the real person. This idea is found, for example, in the seal metaphor articulated by Theodore of Studios (759–826), which draws further upon a similar Neo-Platonist understanding: ‘As a Seal Belonged to an Impression, so a Likeness Belonged to a Model’. (PG 95, 163; 99, 432–33); cf. Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 150. Furthermore, this quote implies that the material (now absent) image relates to its model through visual likeness.
80. ‘Φανταστικόν ἐστὶ δύναμις τῆς ἀλόγου ψυχῆς, διὰ τῶν αἰσθητηρίων ἐνεργοῦσα, [...]. Φανταστὸν δέ, καὶ αἰσθητόν, τὸ τῇ φαντασίᾳ, καὶ τῇ αἰσθήσει ὑποπίπτον’; *De fide orthodoxa*, II, 17 (PG 94, 933); *John of Damascus*, trans. Chase, 241–42. *Phantasia* was one of the



- most useful tools invoked by the ancient orator to arouse the emotions of an audience; Ruth Webb, 'Imagination and the Arousal of the Emotions in Greco-Roman Rhetoric', in *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature*, ed. Susanna Morton Braund and Christopher Gill (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997; repr. 2006), 112–27.
81. Marinis, 'Barbarism', 325–28, with previous literature.
  82. Pierre Noailles and Alphonse Dain, *Les nouvelles de Léon VI, le sage* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1944), 92.
  83. Eberhard W. Sauer, 'Disabling Demonic Images: Regional Diversity in Ancient Iconoclasts' Motives and Targets', in *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. Prusac and Kolrud, 16.
  84. Though it is concise, it is worth consulting Brubaker's discussion on this topic: *Vision and Meaning*, 43–44. In a more general vein, also see Brubaker's summary on the role of images in ninth-century Byzantium, *ibid.*, 41–58. For late antique art, see, e.g., Jaś Elsner, 'Iconoclasm and the Preservation of Memory', in *Monuments and Memory: Made and Unmade*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Margaret Olin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 203–31, at 209. For a critical understanding of the topic in Western medieval culture, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
  85. Photios, Hom. XVII, 5: 'Οὐδὲν τούτων ἔλαττον, εἰ μὴ καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον, κρατεῖ τὰ τῆς ὀψεως [...] καὶ περιέπουσα τὸ εἶδος τοῦ ὀραθέντος τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ παραπέμπεται, ἐκεῖθεν διαπορθμευθῆναι διδούσα τῇ μνήμῃ πρὸς ἐπιστήμης ἀπλανεστάτης συνάθορισιν. Εἶδεν ὁ νοῦς, ἀντελάβετο, ἐφαντάσθη, τοὺς τύπους ἀκόπως ἐν τῇ μνήμῃ παρεπέμψατο'; Basil S. Laourdas, 'Φωτίου Ὁμιλίαι', *Ἑλληνικά* 12 Παράρτημα (1966), 171; *The Homilies of Photios*, trans. Cyril Mango (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 294. Although it relates to sacred images by John of Damascus, his argument is equally applicable to the images discussed here. In defense of the sacred image, he noted that: 'Again, there are said to be images of what is past, either the memory of a certain miracle, or honor, or shame, or virtue, or vice, for the benefit of those who behold them later, so that they may flee what is evil and be zealous for what is good'; John of Damascus, I, 13; *Apologetic Orations Against the Calumniators of the Holy Icons*, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 3, Patristische Texte und Studien 17 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975); *John Damascene: Three Treatises on the Divine Images*, trans. Andrew Louth, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 27.
  86. Elsner, 'Iconoclasm and Preservation', 209.



87. *Ibid.*, 210.
88. The idea of images as mnemonic means perpetuating the past is frequently echoed in Byzantine sources; above, note 85.
89. For the reciprocity of viewer-object in Byzantine art, see James, 'Seeing's Believing', 3, 10–11.
90. The gendered dimension of these specific emotions was recently discussed by Christos Simelidis, 'Emotions in the Poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus', in *Papers Presented at the Seventeenth International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 2015*, ed. Markus Vinzent et al., *Studia Patristica* 82 (Leuven, Paris, and Bristol: Peeters, 2017): 91–101.

### APPENDIX: ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

*Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos, Constantinople, gr. 510, 880–86.*<sup>91</sup>

464 folios+introduction (fols. A–C) containing five miniatures, parchment, dimensions: about 410 × 300 mm. The codex was trimmed; some of the folios are now lost, and others were replaced by fourteenth-century scribes. The text is written in uncials by several different hands; scribes and illuminators are unknown. Unlike the 'liturgical edition' with only sixteen homilies, this is the most ancient and most luxurious version comprising the integral corpus of forty-four orations and additional texts by Gregory of Nazianzos, augmented by the *Significatio in Execheliem*, and the 'Metaphrase of Ecclesiastes', now attributed to Saint Gregory Thaumaturgos (c. 213–270/275). The manuscript contains forty-six full-page miniatures of more than two hundred scenes framed by gold borders and decorated with gold and painted initials, gilded marginal signs and painted headpieces. All the frontispiece miniatures are badly damaged. There are stylistic affinities between this manuscript and the apse mosaics of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (c. 876), and between the manuscript and the illustrations in the ninth-century Chludov Psalter (Moscow, *Hist. Mus.*, cod. 129). At least three illuminators and several miniaturists were responsible for the lavishly decorated manuscript, which was produced in Constantinople between 879 and 882, and was most certainly commissioned by the patriarch Photios for Emperor Basil I and his family.

The Paris *Gregory* remained in Constantinople and was in at least occasional use until the late fourteenth century; in the late fifteenth

century, the book was acquired by John Laskaris, a Greek composer and musical theorist, as well as a diplomat and librarian to Lorenzo de' Medici (c. 1445–1535). It became part of the Royal Library collection in 1594.

**Select Bibliography:** Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium: Image as Exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Sirarpie der Nersessian, 'The Illustrations of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus. Paris Gr. 510', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 197–228; *Byzance et la France médiévale: manuscrits à peintures du III<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, exhibition catalog, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 24 June 1958–31 January 1959, ed. Jean Porcher and Marie-Louise Concasty (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1959), 5–7, XXVI–XXVII.

*Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. Reg. 1B, Bible, Constantinople, c. 940.*<sup>92</sup>

565 folios, parchment, dimensions: 410 × 270 mm, tempera and gold. This is the earliest surviving illustrated Byzantine Bible, probably produced in Constantinople. Only the first volume (Genesis through Psalms) of this two-volume work survives, with eighteen full-page miniatures, five prefatory miniatures and thirteen frontispieces. Each frontispiece miniature is framed by an epigram authored by the commissioner of the book, known as Leo, a Byzantine official, *patrikios*, *praepositos* (grand chamberlain and highest ranking eunuch) and imperial *sakellarios* (treasurer), as identified in a metrical preface. Leo Sakellarios was responsible for the production of the manuscript together with a painter, a poet and at least one scribe (all unknown). Leo's identity has not been established beyond doubt.

Leo donated the volume to a monastery named for Saint Nicholas that had been founded by his deceased brother, Constantine the *protospatharios*. The abbot of the monastery was named Makar. Although the manuscript was most probably produced in Constantinople, it may not have remained there; we have no knowledge of a monastery dedicated to Saint Nicholas in that city. The manuscript became part of the collection of Queen Christina (of Sweden; ruled 1626–1689), from whose collection it passed to the Vatican Library.

**Select Bibliography:** Paul Canart, 'Notice Codicologique et paléographique', in *La Bible du Patrice Leon: Codex Reginensis Graecus 1. Commentaire codicologique, paléographique, philologique et artistique*,

ed. Paul Canart, *Studi e testi* 463 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2011), 9–13; Suzy Dufrenne, ‘Les miniatures’, in *La Bible du Patrice Leon*, 81–184; Paul Canart, ‘Le Vaticanus Reginensis graecus I ou la province à Constantinople’, in *Études de paléographie et de codicologie*, ed. Paul Canart, Maria Luisa Agati, and Marco D’Agostino, *Studi e testi* 451, 2 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2008), 2: 901–06; Suzy Dufrenne and Paul Canart, *Die Bibel des Patricius Leo: Codex Reginensis Graecus I B*, 2 vols. (Zürich: Belser, 1988); Thomas F. Mathews, ‘The Epigrams of Leo Saccellarios and an Exegetical Approach to the Miniatures of Vat. Reg. Gr. I’, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43.1 (1977): 111–18; Cyril Mango: ‘The date of Cod. Vat. Regin. Gr. I and the “Macedonian Renaissance”’, *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 4 (1969): 121–26.

*Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Sacra Parallela, gr. 923, Rome (?)*, after 843 (?).<sup>93</sup>

394 folios (originally 424), parchment, dimensions: 356 × 265 mm. The text contains a theological and ascetic florilegium composed in Palestine by John of Damascus, which combines biblical and patristic citations, all conventionally labelled *Sacra Parallela*. The biblical and exegetical citations are arranged in alphabetical order, by *στοιχεῖα* (alphabetical letters) and *τίτλοι* (titles). The text is written above the line in sloping uncials arranged in two columns. The letters, titles, and books’ and authors’ names are written in uncials on a gold background. The numbered titles relate to the table of contents. There is no single manuscript comprising the entire text. The existing versions may be related to a now lost model, entitled *Hiera*, also composed in Palestine by John Damascene. The text contains three treatises—one on God and the Trinity, second on man and a third one on vices and virtues. The manuscript contains 1658 marginal illuminations, portraits and narrative scenes. The figures are painted in gold with black contour lines, and red was used for faces and other details. The codex is well preserved.

The manuscript was most probably produced in a Greek monastery in Rome in the first or second half of the ninth century. Its whereabouts until 1654 are unknown; at that time, it was mentioned as being preserved in one of the monasteries on Mount Athos. The manuscript was brought to Paris and entered the Royal Library as a gift to the French king Louis XV in 1729. Abbot François Sevin, who brought it

to Paris, received the book from Nicholas (Nicolae) Mavrocordatos, the prince of Wallachia (1719–1730), who was a well-known bibliophile. Mavrocordatos acquired the volume along with other Byzantine books from monasteries in Asia Minor, Palestine and Egypt, including Greece and Mount Athos. It is also possible that as Mavrocordatos's library comprised several other, older libraries that he had inherited, the *Sacra Parallela* may have been acquired from the Athonian monastery by one of the owners of these libraries.<sup>94</sup>

**Select Bibliography:** Irina Oretskaia, 'A Stylistic Tendency in Ninth-century Art of the Byzantine World', *Zograf* 29 (2002–3): 5–18; Maria Evangelatou, 'Word and Image in the *Sacra Parallela* (Codex Parisinus Graecus 923)', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008): 113–98; Massimo Bernabò, 'L'illustrazione del salmo 105[106] a Bisanzio ed una nota sui *Sacra Parallela* di Parigi', *Medioevo e rinascimento* XIV/n.s. XI (2000): 85–109; Kurt Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela: Parisinus Graecus 923*, *Studies in Manuscript Illumination* 8 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); *Byzance et la France médiévale: manuscrits à peintures du II<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, exhibition catalog, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 24 June 1958–31 January 1959, ed. Jean Porcher and Marie-Louise Concasty (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1959), XV, 34–37.

## NOTES

91. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f94.item>.
92. [http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Reg.gr.1.pt.B](http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.gr.1.pt.B).
93. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525013124>.
94. Radu G. Păun, 'Réseaux de livres et réseaux de pouvoirs dans le sud-est de l'Europe: le monde des drogmans (XVII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)', in *Contribution à l'histoire intellectuelle de l'Europe: réseaux du livre, réseaux des lecteurs*, ed. Frédéric Barbier and István Monok (Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2008), 82–85. Also, email communication from Radu Păun, 14.5.2017.

PART V

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## Conclusion



## Gendered Emotions and Affective Genders: A Response

*Stavroula Constantinou*

### EMOTION(S) AND GENDER(S)

According to several sociological studies, there are gender differences in affective functioning.<sup>1</sup> As Leslie Brody and Judith Hall emphatically remark, ‘since males and females are often socialized to have different motives and goals—depending on their ages, cultural backgrounds, and socialization histories—gender differences should occur in emotional processes’.<sup>2</sup> Thus gender should be seriously taken into account in the field of emotion studies. The essays in the present volume amply demonstrate that the central role played by gender in inciting, experiencing, expressing, and understanding emotion and the frequent reference to stereotypes according to which women are more emotional than men are not contemporary phenomena, but also existed in premodern societies.<sup>3</sup>

When medievalists first started becoming interested in the emotionality of medieval societies in the 1990s, Barbara Rosenwein pointed out that gender is a useful category of analysis and highlighted the

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need to adopt a gender perspective in medieval emotion studies.<sup>4</sup> Her suggestion was soon turned into practice, as attested by the growing number of publications dealing with Western medieval gendered emotions.<sup>5</sup> However, the present collection is the first systematic attempt to approach emotion from a gendered perspective in the context of Byzantine studies. Moreover, the volume's contributions focus on various textual and visual sources from different periods, which are approached from a range of perspectives and methodologies.

Through their individual approaches, the authors seek to address a number of issues concerning the social construction and performativity of gendered emotions (Andreou, Georgiou, Messis and Nilsson, Neville, Tougher); the use of emotions by both men and women of the elite to regulate power (Georgiou, Neville); eunuchs' emotionality and the reality of their lives about which sources are mostly silent (Tougher); cross-gender behaviour in which emotionality or impassivity is central (Cantone, Messis and Nilsson); contradictions in the emotional lives and representations of women who assume male roles (Andreou, Cantone, Georgiou, Neville); the importance of memory in stirring (gendered) emotions (Meyer, Neville, Tougher); the literary and artistic representations of men's and women's emotions along with their various uses: aesthetic, narrative, edifying, therapeutic, political, and theological (Andreou, Angelova, Messis and Nilsson, Neville, Tougher); and finally the emotive responses of authors/artists and audiences (actual, textual, and intended), as shaped by their gender (Andreou, Angelova, Georgiou, Messis and Nilsson, Meyer, Neville, Tougher).

By examining these and other subjects that allow the inclusion of a wide range of emotions and emotional expressions, the contributors attempt to unravel the multifaceted, yet fascinating, relationship between Byzantine emotion(s) and gender(s) and how this varies according to authorial intentions, genre, context, origin, class, religiosity, and age. In what follows, I pursue some of the themes and issues that have been introduced a little further: (1) the social and cultural construction of emotion and gender; (2) the poetics of gendered emotionality; and (3) the creation of affective gendered audiences situated both within and outside the text and the artwork. I conclude the discussion of these themes with some thoughts regarding questions that could represent future lines out of research.

As the ensuing discussion further indicates, these three topics are strongly interrelated: since they form part of the dynamic triangular

interplay among author/artist, text/artwork, and audience, one often shapes and is shaped by the other(s). These elements, in turn, constituted parts of a social and cultural system that imposed its (gender) ideologies, stereotypes, and conventions on the Byzantines; moreover, the interrelationship among them also involved a cognitive functioning in which emotionality and memory coexisted.

The renowned neuroscientist Antonio Damasio contends that cognitive functioning, emotional experience, and memory are interdependent. The cognitive dimension of emotion comprises judgement and perception through which an individual understands, assesses, and controls feelings based on social and cultural conventions, and memory plays a key role in these processes, as it both gives rise to and is awakened by emotions.<sup>6</sup> Damasio acknowledges the strong influence of social and cultural factors on the cognitive function of emotions, but he virtually ignores the gender dimension, which is essential for an understanding of emotionality.

Such findings in cognitive science have been adapted to the affective context of visual art and literature, but without seriously considering gender effects.<sup>7</sup> The cognitive psychologist Keith Oatley, in particular, demonstrates that readers respond to literary characters with empathy owing to personal memories of emotion and identification with the characters' goals and plans. The readers' empathy does not differ from the empathy they feel for real people, as it was found that the same mental processes are activated in both cases. What remains to be investigated, then, concerns a reader's cognitive responses in relation to his/her own gender and that of the fictional characters.

Thus, when approaching the literary depiction of emotionality, the gender dimension of the cognition and memory of authors, characters, and audiences should become an integral part of the investigation (see below: 'The Poetics of Gendered Emotionality' and 'Affective Gendered Audiences'). In this context, it is important to consider how literature models the interaction among gender, language, cognition, emotion, memory, and perception.

This interaction can be approached fruitfully through the perspective of cognitive poetics, which involves the application of cognitive linguistics and psychology to literature and 'has a broad view of context that encompasses both social and personal circumstances'. In the words of Peter Stock 'cognitive poetics has the potential to offer a unified explanation of both individual interpretations as well as interpretations that



are shared by a group, community, or culture'.<sup>8</sup> Adding the gender dimension, one could say that cognitive poetics concerns both individual men and women acting as authors, characters, or audiences, as well as male and female groups or gendered 'emotional communities', to use Rosenwein's term, undertaking one or more of these roles.

Even though cognitive poetics is primarily relevant to literature, it can also be applied to visual art, another rich cognitive artefact, which, like literature, involves the mental processes of both the artists and their audiences, on the one hand, and an analysis of style and artistic craft, on the other. Within the framework of the present volume, cognitive poetics is understood as a *way of thinking with* both literature and art through the involvement of gendered emotions.<sup>9</sup> This process is mostly pertinent in the case of illuminated manuscripts, where image and text interact inducing a range of emotional responses that at times led real male audiences to engage in destructive actions (Cantone, Meyer).

### 'DOING' GENDER THROUGH EMOTIONS

According to Judith Butler, gender is a 'doing'.<sup>10</sup> It is an identity 'performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results'.<sup>11</sup> More specifically, 'gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being'.<sup>12</sup> Gender is thus a performance whose script and costume are decided and controlled by a given society and culture that nevertheless treat gender identity as natural and therefore necessary. The naturalness of gender is achieved through its association with procreative and other biological differences, which legitimate gender inequalities allowing the reinforcement and continuation of a given society's (male-dominated) structures.

To Butler's description of gender as the 'repeated stylization of the body', one might add recurrent emotionality, which, according to the essays in this volume and other studies that examine the intersection of emotion and gender in past or present cultures, is an integral part of how men and women (and also eunuchs in the case of Byzantium) are defined. Both masculinity and femininity are achieved and practiced in accordance with established emotion values and affective expressions. In other words, social norms and stereotypes dictate how, when, and where men and women should express particular emotions.

Byzantine men, for instance, had to show impassivity in the face of adversity, whereas women and eunuchs were expected to express anguish (Andreou, Neville, Tougher). In Byzantine culture, ‘real’ men were thought to be masters of their passions, but women and eunuchs were considered to be victims of their pleasures and feelings. The social rules that suggested women’s and eunuchs’ natural inability to control their emotions, similar to other conventions supporting their inferiority, functioned as effective means for reinforcing and maintaining the power relations of the patriarchal Byzantine society.<sup>13</sup> In the words of Liz James, ‘the prevailing ideology of inferior woman’, and one could add eunuch, ‘served to restrict [t]he[i]r ability to act’.<sup>14</sup>

As the contents of this volume suggest, the assumed incapacity of women and eunuchs to occupy positions of power and control in Byzantine society was to a large extent based on the perception of their emotional vulnerability. Women, for example, were often considered unfit for ruling, owing to their inability to regulate their emotions and to exhibit the male ruler’s reasonable and just anger (Georgiou). Considered as imperfect men, eunuchs were by definition unfit to ascend the throne. Yet, unlike women, eunuchs ‘were visible in many prominent roles’ particularly in the Middle Byzantine period (Tougher).<sup>15</sup>

Prospective male rulers were provided with handbooks for successful rulership—the so-called ‘mirrors for princes’—where a number of gendered male emotions were treated. Apart from dealing with the ruler’s anger and its various forms, these texts encouraged the (future) emperor to feel shame (‘αἰδώς’) in the face of his own mistakes. At the same time, they advised him to suppress the emotion of the pride (‘ἄλαζονεία’) that was believed to arise from a positive assessment of a man’s deeds and was associated with his possession of high offices.<sup>16</sup>

The gendering of feelings in various texts addressed to audiences that shared the same gender or to composite audiences was another powerful means of promoting the patriarchal ideals of Byzantine society. This literature taught men to control their emotions in order to be able to perform their public tasks effectively and be competent in their role as the head of a family.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, women were urged to acquire and practice such emotions as affection, joyfulness, and compassion, which would improve their performance in their designated roles as mothers and family caretakers. They were also asked to avoid aggression and anger, since these emotions endangered their success as submissive daughters, wives, and mothers. Women, such as Theodora and Antonina, who according

to Prokopios were aggressive and wrathful, became bad wives and mothers,<sup>18</sup> whereas Michael Psellos's mother, who was devoted to her parents and family with great, yet hidden, affection and had a 'cheerful glance', was seen as an exemplary wife and mother.<sup>19</sup>

For Butler, gender is also 'a project which has natural survival at its end'.<sup>20</sup> An individual has to become gendered through following, for example, emotion and other scripts to be able to survive. She goes on to say that 'as a strategy of survival within compulsory systems, gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences. Discrete genders are part of what "humanizes" individuals within contemporary culture; indeed, we regularly punish those who fail to do their gender right'.<sup>21</sup>

Prokopios's Theodora, for example, was punished in her early days for not 'doing her gender right'. Instead of leading an honourable maiden's life, she became a prostitute-actress, conduct that led to social stigmatization. Her fellow citizens treated her as a miasma and an evil omen:

And all the more respectable people who chanced upon her in the market-place would turn aside and retreat in haste, lest they should touch any of the woman's garments and so seem to have partaken of this pollution. For she was, to those who saw her, particularly early in the day, a bird of foul omen.

ὄσοι δὲ αὐτῇ ἐν ἀγορᾷ τῶν ἐπιεικεστέρων ἐντύχοιεν, ἀποκλινόμενοι σπουδῇ ὑπεχώρουσιν, μὴ τοῦ τῶν ἱματίων τῆς ἀνθρώπου ἀψάμενοι μεταλαχεῖν τοῦ μιάσματος τούτου δόξειαν. ἦν γὰρ τοῖς ὁρῶσιν ἄλλως τε καὶ ἀρχομένης ἡμέρας βλάβημος οἰωνός.<sup>22</sup>

The empresses surveyed by Georgiou appear to violate shared beliefs about how women should behave and perform their emotional selves. Consequently, they were punished by contemporary male historiographers and theologians through defamation and a devaluation of their work. The male strategy of their denigration proved very successful, as it shaped later and even modern notions about them.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast, according to Neville, John Kaminiates and Anna Komnene took all pains to do their respective genders correctly. By hiding his emotionality in the face of a family tragedy, Kaminiates presented himself as a good man and an objective author, whereas Komnene constructed herself as a good woman by doing exactly the opposite: she was overcome by grief and burst into tears when she remembered those of her own family who were no longer alive. Yet she repressed her womanly feelings when

she assumed the male role of historiographer. Similarly, Andronikos and Athanasia in Andreou's chapter are depicted performing their respective genders appropriately, which is why it was much easier for the impassive Andronikos to ascend to holiness, which is by definition masculine, than it was for the emotional Athanasia.<sup>24</sup> As a final example, as Meyer shows, the male readers of illuminated manuscripts also did their gender correctly when they destroyed the images of nude female figures.

While failure to perform one's gender appropriately often led to punishment and marginalization, gender blending through manipulating emotions was not just accepted, but also highly praised. Such examples are found in images of holy women (Cantone) and in hagiographical texts, chiefly in the lives of cross-dressing saints (Andreou). However, it is important to note that gender blending was welcome only if it was performed by women. Women who suppressed their emotionality and showed male impassivity (e.g. the female martyrs in the *Menologion of Basil II* who were painted in male bodies and the cross-dressing Athanasia in the *Life of Andronikos and Athanasia*), became men and were treated as such while at the same time they were deemed worthy of the crown of holiness. Men, in contrast, who, for example, demonstrated their sorrow by bursting into tears were often considered effeminate ('γυναικώδεις') and as such became laughing stocks.<sup>25</sup>

In short, female protagonists became better women and were even sanctified when they suppressed female emotionality and adopted male impassivity. The exact opposite was true in the case of mature men if they expressed women's feelings: they turned into female men and as such lost their social respect. However, this was not so with the boys depicted in the erotic literature. As Messis and Nilsson show, the young male protagonists of love tales had an 'undecided gender status', as their emotional behaviour had both male and female elements. Yet the androgyny of lovestruck boys also served patriarchal ideals, as it functioned as a rite of passage initiating them into manhood. Evidently, it was through the experience of female emotionality, caused by Eros's arrows, that the heroes of erotic narratives achieved male emotionlessness and thus became 'real' men, incorporating their society's principles.

However, in erotic art as Angelova demonstrates, Byzantine artists sought their motifs in mythological and allegorical figures in an attempt to incite erotic feelings in their audiences. Nevertheless, scenes of violence against female figures that were depicted in artworks, such as the

Veroli box, suggest that artists had a male gaze projecting its fantasy on erotic iconographic programs in which a sexually abused ravishing maiden became the subject of a male spectator's desiring look.

## THE POETICS OF GENDERED EMOTIONALITY

Most of cognitive poetic approaches to narrative literature that discuss emotions look at the reader's emotive responses to the text and the way in which these contribute to an understanding of the story.<sup>26</sup> Despite the 'importance of the emotions in an analysis of the fictional mind',<sup>27</sup> literary scholars have not shown much interest in the narrators' or fictional characters' emotion discourse and affective worlds—their emotional interactions, responses, and knowledge and how all these determine a work's structure and poetics, on the one hand, and influence the readers' affective reactions, on the other.<sup>28</sup>

The poetics of gendered emotionality—the subject of this longer section—in both ancient and modern literature does not seem to have attracted much scholarly attention.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, about half of the chapters included in this volume suggest, in one way or another, that gendered emotions are central elements of the studied narratives and that they are essential to an understanding of their structures (Andreou, Georgiou, Messis and Nilsson, Neville). According to the analyses undertaken in these chapters and other recent work by some of the same contributors,<sup>30</sup> gendered emotions have three interconnected functions that determine the form and perception of the subject texts: they serve (1) as rhetorical devices, (2) as techniques of characterization, and (3) as means of advancing and sustaining the plot.

### 1. Rhetoric

According to the volume's relevant chapters, the frequent use of emotion words by Byzantine historiographers, hagiographers, and novelists achieves several purposes. First, it reinforced the rhetorical appeal and sophistication of the works of such authors. Second, the adoption of rhetorical formulae referring to female emotionality or male impassivity allowed narrators to explain, praise, or criticize a certain character's gender or cross-gender behaviour and general conduct. Third, emotion vocabulary accompanying the narrator's presentation of heroes and heroines added to their characterization, which acquired a more coherent

sense through the depiction of their emotional worlds in association with their dispositions regarding both their own and other characters' emotions [see (2) Characterization]. Fourth, the language of emotion was employed to highlight a certain character and to set him or her apart from other narrative heroes and heroines or from other contemporary Byzantine men and women.

Anna Komnene's excessive emotive language, for example, which was often drawn from ancient Greek tragedy,<sup>31</sup> and her monody and tears, which are repeated at the beginning and the end of the *Alexiad*, as well as during the narration of the events that occurred during her father's reign (Alexios I Komnenos, 1081–1118) were the elements of a rhetorical strategy that set the tone of her history. As the work of a sorrowful woman, who shared the education and knowledge of a male intellectual and historian such as Michael Psellos,<sup>32</sup> the *Alexiad* appears to have originated in Anna's attempts to both come to terms with her womanly grief and perform the male task of saving Alexios's deeds from oblivion (*Alexiad*, Prologue). Through her strong and omnipresent emotionality, which often made her lose track of historical time, Anna established her authorial presence throughout the whole work. In so doing, she did not just become a powerful author and narrator with both male and female features, but she also assumed a protagonistic role in the *Alexiad*, which thus acquired a strong autobiographical character.<sup>33</sup>

Anna also employed rhetorical formulae and conventions concerning female emotionality which were equated with women's frailty. For example, she emphatically stated that women are inclined to cowardice and fear and that they easily yield to tearful sorrow.<sup>34</sup> Her rhetoric of women's emotionality and its unconstrained expression had a double purpose. First, to criticize men who, like women, could not control their emotions and thus appeared womanish.<sup>35</sup> Second, to stress the superiority and maleness of the women who played an important role in Alexios's life and rulership (i.e. his mother, Anna Dalassene, and his wife, Eirene Doukaina), who appeared brave in the face of adversity, war, and political and religious crises.<sup>36</sup> For instance, Anna wrote about her mother Eirene:

For these were the reasons [the role that Eirene undertook as the emperor's sleepless guardian] that moved away from her [Eirene] the *innate shyness of women*, and she courageously acquired the eyes of men. [...] For she was brave and steady-minded, like that woman who is praised by Solomon in the Proverbs. She did not show any *womanish* and *cowardly behaviour*

such as the one we habitually see performed by women when they hear something terrible. Even their colour betrays the *cowardice of their soul*, and they often scream passionately as if the disasters had already reached them. But that empress, though being anxious, was worrying about the emperor lest a mishap should befall him, fear for herself came second. At that [difficult] time thus she did not do anything that was unworthy of her boldness. (emphasis added)

ταῦτα τοίνυν τὰ αἷτια τὴν σύμφυτον αἰδῶ τῆς γυναικὸς ἐκείνης παρηγκωνίζετο καὶ ἐθάρρει τοὺς ἄρρενας ὀφθαλμούς [...]. ἀνδρεία γὰρ καὶ στάσιμος οὕσα τὴν φρένα καθάπερ<ή>παρὰ τοῦ Σολομῶντος ἐν Παροιμίαις ὑμνουμένη ἐκείνη γυνὴ οὐ γυναικῶδες τί ἐνεδειξατο καὶ ἄθαρσές ἦθος, οἷα τὰ πολλὰ τὰς γυναῖκας ὀρώμεν πασχούσας, ἐπειδὴν τι φοβερὸν ἀκούσωσι, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ χρῶμα κατηγορεῖ τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν δειλίαν, καὶ συχνάκις ἀνακωκύουσι γοερὸν ὥσπερ ἐκ τοῦ σχεδὸν αὐταῖς τῶν δεινῶν ἐφεστηκότων· ἀλλ' ἦ γε βασιλὶς ἐκείνη, κἄν ἐδεδοίκει, περὶ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι ἐδεδοίκει, μὴ τι πάθῃ ἄτοπον, δευτέρως δὲ περὶ ἑαυτῆς ἐπεφόβητο. οὐ τοίνυν ἐκείνη κατ' ἐκείνο καιροῦ ἀνάξιόν τι τῆς ἑαυτοῦ γενναιότητος ἐπεπόνθει.<sup>37</sup>

For Anna, her mother was an exceptional, that is, a masculine, woman deserving the same praise as the biblical woman in Proverbs. What set her apart from the women of her society was her judgement and an absence of such extreme female emotions as paralysing fear, static shyness, and tearful grief. She undertook responsibilities that common women were afraid of performing, thus revealing a man's courage. By managing her emotions and any associated bodily responses with reason, she also regulated her behaviour. Unlike women but like men, she did not lose her mind when she received disastrous news. Her composure in the midst of hard times allowed her to continue performing her tasks as the emperor's guardian and helper. Eirene did not exhibit any of the negative female feelings enumerated above, yet as an exemplary wife, like Psellos's mother, she had a true love and affection for her husband. Her anxieties were not for herself, but for the well-being of her spouse. In fact, the emotions she experienced and the ones she subdued served the same purpose, that is, the successful performance of her female roles as wife and empress.

The *Alexiad* could well be described as the work of gendered emotion rhetoric *par excellence*. Anna systematically employed gendered emotions as powerful rhetorical devices that revealed the learned and sophisticated

nature of her work, its intertextual relationships with ancient literature, the Bible and Byzantine historiography, her complex skills of character manipulation, and the careful construction of her own authorial and emotional self. As the following discussion further illustrates, from the perspective of gendered emotions, the *Alexiad* is one of the richest extant Byzantine texts.

## 2. Characterization

As the above short discussion of Eirene's portrait suggests, Anna employed gendered emotions not only for rhetorical purposes, but also as techniques for characterization.<sup>38</sup> Before going on to a further discussion of this second literary use of gendered emotions, I should point out that character here, as indicated earlier, is understood primarily from the perspective of cognitive poetics, namely as a narrative person who 'can be ascribed physical, social, and mental properties'.<sup>39</sup> The character's mental world involves cognitive, emotional, and perceptual processes and memory, as well as knowledge, ideologies, attitudes, wishes, goals, plans, intentions, and dispositions.<sup>40</sup>

In the *Alexiad*, the character whose mental world is mostly exemplified is that of Anna herself, who spoke directly to her audiences revealing her knowledge, experiences, judgements, and intentions. In fact, it was chiefly through her womanish emotionality, which she wished to both express and suppress, that Anna gave an account of her inner thoughts, her prejudices, and the workings of her mind. Her mental world, which became accessible at the outset, is further revealed throughout the text, which directs the reader's or listener's perception.

After introducing herself and the subject of her work, Anna confessed in the Prologue:

And although I have *decided* to write about his [Alexios's] deeds, I am *afraid* that [...] someone might think that by writing my father's works I am praising myself, and that the whole history is a lie and a pure encomium if I eulogize any of his deeds. [...] I am also *afraid* of the scoffers who [...] are altogether crooked, and being filled with wickedness and *envy* cannot see the right thing, and they blame innocent people, as Homer has it. However, when someone undertakes the historian's task he has to *forget* either *kindness* or *hatred*. [...] Having said these things, my *soul is overpowered by faintness* and my eyes are blocked with plenty of *tears*.



Oh, what a counsellor has lost the Roman Empire. [...] My *grief* for the Caesar [Nikephoros Bryennios] and his unexpected death have *severely touched my soul* and generated a *deep trauma*. And I *consider* all previous calamities as just a little drop in comparison to this insatiable one that encompasses the whole Atlantic Ocean. [...] I *feel*, however, that these [matters] have carried me away from the task at hand. [...] I will thus *wipe from my eyes the tears*. [...] Let now the history of my own father start, let it start from the right point and the right point is when the discourse becomes clearer and more historical. (emphasis added)

ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἐκείνου πράξεις προελομένη συγγράφειν δέδοικα [...] μὴ ποτε λογισαίτο τις τὰ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πατρὸς συγγράφουσαν τὰ ἐαυτῆς ἐπαινεῖν, καὶ ψεῦδος ἅπαν δόξη τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας πρᾶγμα καὶ ἐγκώμιον ἄντικρυς, εἴ τι τῶν ἐκείνου θαυμάζοιμι. [...] δέδοικα πάλιν τοὺς φιλοσκώμμονας, [...] ἐποφθαλμιῶντες ἅπαντες πρὸς ἅπαντας καὶ οὐ καθορῶντες τὸ καλῶς ἔχον ὑπὸ βασκανίας καὶ φθόνου, καὶ τὸν ἀναίτιον καθ' Ὁμηρον αἰτιῶνται. ὅταν γάρ τις τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας ἦθος ἀναλαμβάνη, ἐπιλαθέσθαι χρὴ εὐνοίας καὶ μίσους [...] ἐγὼ δ' ἐνταῦθα γενομένη σκοτοδίνης ἐμπίπλαμαι τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ρείθροις δακρύου περιτέγγω τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. ὡ οἷον ἡ Ῥωμαίων ἀπόλωλε βούλευμα. [...] τὸ μέντοι πάθος τὸ περὶ τὸν καίσαρα καὶ ὁ κατ' αὐτὸν ἀνέλπιστος θάνατος αὐτῆς μου καθίκετο τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ἐς βάθος τὸ τραῦμα εἰργάσατο. καὶ ἡγοῦμαι τὰς προειληφύιας συμφορὰς πρὸς ταύτην τὴν ἄπληστον συμφορὰν ψεκᾶδα ὡς ὄντως πρὸς ὄλον Ἀτλαντικὸν Πέλαγος. [...] ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐμαυτῆς αἰσθάνομαι διὰ ταῦτα παρενηνεγμένης τοῦ προκειμένου. [...] ἀποψήσασα οὖν τὸ δάκρυον τῶν ὀμμάτων. [...] ἀρκτέον τοίνυν ἐνθένδε τῆς ἱστορίας τοῦμοῦ πατρὸς, ὅθεν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι ἄμεινον· ἄμεινον δὲ ὅθεν σαφέστερός τε καὶ ἱστορικώτερός ὁ λόγος γενήσεται.<sup>41</sup>

As soon as Anna expressed her intention to write her father's history, an unpleasant thought came to her mind: her intention might not be fulfilled if, owing to her close kinship with the protagonist, her work would be perceived as an encomium rather than as history. This thought caused a fear identified as author's anxiety, which increased as she considered the wicked and envious people who, blinded by their passions, would not be able to discern the true nature of her work. The effect of the interaction between Anna's thoughts and emotions as a female author is disclosed in her next sentence, which states a commonly accepted truth about writing history: '[W]hen someone undertakes the historian's task he has to forget either kindness or hatred'. In other words, history writing is by definition emotionless (and thus masculine), a convention which, as Anna makes clear, she will follow.

Yet while talking about history's objectivity, which she saw as the outcome of the historian's impassivity, Anna burst into tears, expressing her overwhelming sorrow. The quick change in her situation from objective impassibility to deep emotionality, from masculinity to femaleness, was triggered by the memory of her dead husband, Nikephoros Bryennios, whose notes she used for writing her own history. Her lamentations, however, took the form of a monody that revealed her rich secular education. In the midst of her tears, she referenced ancient tragedies and used poetic language and figures of speech while at the same time judging Nikephoros Bryennios's character and abilities.

Anna's sophisticated lamentation was soon replaced by the historian's serene discourse. While performing her monody and towards its end, Anna 'felt' that she had moved away from the task she had set for herself: to write a historical work. Interestingly, she used the verb 'to feel' (αἰσθάνομαι) with the meaning of the verb 'to realize'. Moreover, Anna's interchangeable use of words referring to emotionality and consciousness reveals the interaction of her memories, feelings, intentions, and thoughts at a linguistic level. At this point, Anna was quick to wipe away her tears and become unemotional once again. Her emotionality and impassivity were in accord with the conventions of the literary genres with which she opened a dialogue through her writing. When she was in a literary dialogue with tragedy she exhibited the grief of tragic heroines, and when she engaged with historical facts she adopted the male historian's impassive discourse.

By interchanging moments of consciousness with instants of profound emotionality, Anna managed to build up a persuasive and sound sense of her literary persona. She appears as a character with 'physical, social, and mental properties' who aimed at achieving the audience's emotional engagement (see 'Affective Gendered Audiences' below). Of course, a character's mental world is not the only aspect of characterization one can detect in the *Alexiad*. The depicted exchanges between the mental worlds of characters or between those of characters and that of the narrator also contributed to the characterization. Such instances are seen, for example, in the emotional interaction between Robert Guiscard, the Norman ruler of southern Italy, and his father-in-law, Gulielmus Mascabeles, in the first book of the *Alexiad* (Bk 1.XI) and in Anna's emotive reactions to it. Another case in point is the mental clash between Emperor Alexios and Robert's son Bohemond accompanied by Anna's cognitive responses (Bk 10.XI). Indeed, there is much to say about

characterization in relation to gendered affectivity and consciousness in the *Alexiad*, but that discussion would be beyond the scope of the present response.

### 3. Plot

In his attempt to define plot and distinguish it from story, in his influential *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) E. M. Forster wrote:

‘The king died, and then the queen died’ is a story. ‘The king died, and then the queen died of *grief*’ is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it. Or again: ‘The queen died, no one knew why, until it was discovered that it was through grief at the death of the king’. This is a plot with a *mystery* in it, a form capable of *high development*. It suspends the time-sequence, it moves as far away from the story as its limitations will allow. Consider the death of the queen. If it is a story we say: ‘And then?’ If it is a plot we ask: ‘*Why?*’ That is the fundamental difference between these two aspects of the novel.<sup>42</sup> (emphasis added)

According to Forster, the essential element that makes for a plot is emotion. In his example, it is the queen’s grief that transforms the story—the presentation of one thing or event after another—into the plot which is understood in terms of a character’s emotionality functioning as a principle of causation. For Forster, emotion created an atmosphere of mystery facilitating narrative development. The explanation of the queen’s death as the result of her grief for her husband’s preceding death turns the narrative in a direction that will set off a series of events with consequences, which in turn will lead to further events and thus the narrative will develop. In other words, emotion is an important device in setting a plot going, keeping it going or changing its direction, and bringing it to closure. Therefore, in order to understand and explain a plot and its workings, one has to analyse its patterns of emotion.

Without seeming to realize it, Forster used a gendered emotion to describe the workings of his king-and-queen plot, which turned out to be a carrier of patriarchal ideology. It was the queen who died of grief for the loss of her husband and not the king for the queen. If excessive grief, such as that experienced by this anonymous queen, is a female emotion, one would not expect to find a story in which a king experiences such a deathly sorrow—at least there is no widely known fairytale built around

such a state of affairs. As we know from such fairy tales as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *The Six Swans*, when a king loses his wife he usually marries another woman; and after securing a replacement for the dead queen he continues ruling over his subjects while his children from the first queen have to undergo suffering before they are able to take on their rightful places as princesses or princes.

In fact, the emotional world of Forster's queen does not differ much from those of Eirene Doukaina and Psellos's mother: her death is the strongest sign of her unconditional love for and devotion to her husband without whom her life appears meaningless. Empress Eirene, in particular, might well be seen as the queen's double. Towards the end of the *Alexiad*, she nearly dies of deep sorrow as she sees Emperor Alexios expiring (Bk XV.11). Taking into account the texts discussed in this volume, one realizes that Forster's theory of a plot that is based on his analysis of the Western novel is also valid for Byzantine narratives.

The impact of gendered emotion on the structure of Byzantine narratives depends chiefly on authorial intentions and generic conventions. In the case of the *Alexiad*, the work's stark emotionality at all the levels: rhetorical, characterological, and structural, which is unconventional in Byzantine historiography, is the result of Anna's authorial objectives. In regard to the generic dimension, owing to their nature and content, some genres have stronger emotive structures than others. The erotic literature discussed by Messis and Nilsson, for instance, is characterized by an intense affective structure in which one gendered emotion is followed by another and the plot unfolds until it reaches its happy end.

Firstly, the two protagonists fall in love at first sight, but they are unhappy because they cannot be together. Their tears and lamentations disclose their feminine emotionality.<sup>43</sup> In their attempt to change their situation, they escape together thus changing their sadness into great joy. Nevertheless, their happiness is short-lived, since they are soon separated, and as result they become deeply sorrowful once again. During their separation, they also experience a number of other negative feelings (e.g. fear, anxiety, anger, and shame), which are often expressed in gendered ways as their chastity, honour, and life are threatened by other characters who want to take advantage of them. Eventually, the protagonists' negative emotions are transformed into positive ones when towards the end of the narrative they meet again, marry, and live together happily ever after.<sup>44</sup>

In contrast, the narrative structure of hagiographical literature does not have the erotic narrative's high emotional investment and there is less emphasis on emotionality owing to interrelationships and interactions among the characters that sets the plot in motion. However, according to what we read in Andreou's chapter, there are hagiographical narratives, such as the ones that have a husband and a wife as the protagonists, which are to a large extent structured around female emotionality that arises in the face of family adversity and death.

Emotive plot, like affective rhetoric and characterization, is an important aspect of the poetics of Byzantine narrative literature and it has features that cannot be investigated here. Undoubtedly, the examination of the three aspects of gendered emotionality's poetics and their interaction can offer both fruitful readings of Byzantine narratives, either religious or secular, and a better understanding of the constructions of gendered emotionality in Byzantine culture.

### AFFECTIVE GENDERED AUDIENCES

Anna did not just describe her own emotional state and that of her characters, but also presented and discussed the emotional reactions of audiences that, like those of the *Alexiad's* characters, were frequently determined by gender. Anna's audiences,<sup>45</sup> as is the case with those of most texts analysed in this volume, took three different forms.<sup>46</sup> The first was the textual (fictional) audience which, for example, witnessed Emperor Alexios's marvellous public acts in Constantinople and his daring military campaigns (e.g. *Alexiad*, Bk 3.V; Bk 5.IV, VI–VII) or attended the confusing teachings of a scholar such as John Italos, whom Anna portrayed in a very negative light (*Alexiad*, Bk 5.VIII–IX).<sup>47</sup> The second audience was the implied one, which was both textual and real. The implied audience consisted of Anna's ideal readers or listeners which were constructed within the text through her direct addresses to them, her accounts, criticisms, and recommendations. The role of these first two audiences (fictional and implied) was to influence the perceptions of her third audience, that is, the actual (real) audience, either contemporary (primary) or posterior (secondary). The actual reader or listener was asked to respond emotionally to the affectivity of the fictional and implied audiences, just as he or she was invited to empathize with the narrative's characters.

Anna's fictional audience was multifaceted. The *Alexiad's* fictional audiences were as many and varied as were the work's episodes.<sup>48</sup> There were small private audiences (e.g. the circle of Italos's male students) and big public ones. The latter were mostly formed by a large number of people attending the public events that populate the *Alexiad*. When, for example, the events took place on battlefields, their audiences were chiefly male warriors, but the audiences that gathered in streets and public squares were mixed and represented a whole community. An important characteristic of Anna's fictional public audiences was their theatricality, which was another element that Anna seems to have borrowed from Psellos:<sup>49</sup> they are described in theatrical terms, they are staged within dramaturgical settings, and their emotions are vividly presented.

Frequently, the emotional involvement of Anna's fictional public audiences is reminiscent of the audiences in ancient tragedies as described by Aristotle in his *Poetics*.<sup>50</sup> He wrote that spectators of tragedy experiencing pity and fear undergo *katharsis* (*Poetics*, 1449b.27–8), which Martha Nussbaum sees not as purification of emotions—the usual translation of the word 'katharsis'—but as clarification: the spectators' understanding of their emotions in association with those of the tragic characters.<sup>51</sup> Anna appears to have adopted the ancient understanding of tragedy as a political performance in a ritualized context enabling a community to become more responsive to its vulnerable or suffering members.<sup>52</sup>

An example in which a fictional public audience showed the fear and pity of the Aristotelian audience and experienced the subsequent *katharsis*, yet in the gendered ways that are of interest here, is found in the twelfth book of the *Alexiad* (Bk 12.VI.5–9). This is the episode that concerns the punishments—public humiliation and blinding—imposed upon Michael Anemas and some of his fellow conspirators who were caught in their attempt to murder Emperor Alexios. Eventually, Michael is spared by the emperor owing to the pleading of the empress, who was influenced by her daughter Anna.

The Anemas episode was staged as a tragedy performed in the Agora of Constantinople before its inhabitants including Anna herself and other members of the imperial family. This public drama had a tragedian (Alexios, who gave the orders about the traitors' public defamation and their blinding, which was about to follow), masters of performance (who made certain that the show would be executed according to

Alexios's orders and that it would be both massively attended and highly spectacular), a chorus consisting of lictors, and finally actors (the conspirators) who were dressed in fitting costumes. There was also a *koryphaios* ('ὁ κορυφαῖος'; Bk 12.VI.4.10) in the drama, Michael.

Anna gave a graphic presentation of the actors' preparation for the performance. First their heads were shaved and then their beards were cut off. Later, they were dressed in sacks by the masters of ceremony, who also decorated their shaved heads with the entrails of oxen and sheep. As soon as the conspirators' absurd dressing was completed, they were placed sideways on oxen. Soon afterwards, they were paraded in the Agora, preceded by lictors who sang a ridiculous song that was suitable for such a procession, inviting the whole city to come and attend the performance. As Anna wrote:

People of all ages ran together to see such a spectacle, and even we, the daughters of the emperor went out secretly to watch it. When the bystanders saw Michael looking at the palace and raising suppliant hands to the sky, asking through gestures that his arms should be removed from his shoulders and his legs from the buttocks, and that his head be cut off, every creature was moved to tears and lamentations, and we, the daughters of the emperor, were moved more than anyone else. And I, wishing to save the man from such an evil [fate], implored once and twice the empress and my mother to come and see the procession. [...] But as she delayed her arrival (for she was sitting with the emperor with whom she was praying together to God before the Mother of God), I went down and standing full of fear outside the gates, because I did not dare to enter, I invited her [to come] through signs. And after she was persuaded, she came to the spectacle, and upon seeing Michael, she pitied him. Shedding warm tears, she ran back to the emperor, and implored him once, twice and thrice, and many times to spare the eyes of Michael.

ἅπανσα μὲν οὖν ἠλικία ἐς τὴν τοιαύτην θέαν συνέτρεχεν, ὡς καὶ ἡμᾶς, τὰς τοῦ βασιλέως θυγατέρας, ἐξεληθούσας λαθραῖαν τὴν θέαν ποιῆσθαι. ὡς δὲ τὸν Μιχαὴλ ὡς πρὸς τὰ ἀνάκτορα θεάσαντο ἐνατενίζοντα καὶ χεῖρας ἰκέτιδας ἐς οὐρανὸν αἶροντα, αἰτούμενον ἐν σχήματι χεῖρας ἐξ ὧμων ἀφαιρεθῆναι καὶ πόδας ἐκ γλουτῶν αὐτῶν καὶ κεφαλὴν αὐτὴν ἀποτμηθῆναι, ἅπανσα φύσις πρὸς δάκρυον καὶ οἰμωγὰς κεκίνηται, καὶ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς, αἱ τοῦ βασιλέως θυγατέρες. ἐγὼ δέ, βουλομένη τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦ τοιοῦτου ῥύσασθαι κακοῦ, τὴν βασιλίδα καὶ μητέρα ἅπαξ καὶ δις προῦκαλούμην ἐς θέαν τῶν πομπευομένων. [...] ὡς δὲ ἐκεῖνη ἀπάκνει τὴν ἔλευσιν (καθῆστο γὰρ μετὰ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, οὗ τὰς πρὸς Θεοῦ

έντεύξεις κοινή ἐποιοῦντο ἐνώπιον τῆς Θεομήτορος), κατελθοῦσα καὶ ἔξω τῶν πυλῶν περίφοβος ἔστηκυῖα, ἐπεὶ μὴ ἀπεθάρρουν τὴν εἴσοδον, νεύμασι τὴν βασίλισσαν προῦκαλούμην. καὶ δὴ πεισθεῖσα εἰς τὴν θέαν ἀνέρχεται, καὶ θεασαμένη τὸν Μιχαὴλ ὤκτειρέ τε καὶ δάκρυον ἐπαφείσα τούτῳ θερμὸν ἐπανατρέχει πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα, ἅπαξ καὶ δις καὶ τρίς καὶ πολλάκις ἐξαίτουμένη χάρισσασθαι τῷ Μιχαὴλ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς.<sup>53</sup>

When the assembled Constantinopolitan crowd witnessed Michael's dramatic performance—he gestured towards the palace making it clear that he would prefer to lose his arms, legs, and head rather than his eyes—it experienced a profound surge of compassion for his horrifying fate. Even so, the compassion of the royal women was much stronger than that of their male counterparts. As suggested above (“Doing” Gender through Emotions’), Byzantine women were encouraged to show more and stronger feelings, as these were thought to facilitate their role as the caretakers of the family. The Anemas episode exhibited in the most graphic way that the moral judgement of women focused on care and was determined by the emotions associated with it, whereas that of men was based on justice, which appeared to be emotionless.

Anna's intense emotional engagement in Michael's sufferings made her realize the atrocity of his upcoming punishment, an understanding that set her in motion. As a woman and as the emperor's daughter, she felt responsible for the punishment ordered by her father, which she considered too cruel and morally problematic. In order to prevent Michael's blinding, Anna did not turn to her father, who decreed the violent punishment to avenge an unrighteous act and in so doing attempted to bring justice. She summoned her mother instead, as she believed that if Eirene saw Michael's spectacle she would experience the same womanly feelings of compassion and sympathy. Anna's fear, which was associated with her pity, was due to the realization that she might not be able to convince her mother to come and witness the spectacle and thus would fail to prevent Michael's brutal victimization.

Anna's moves proved extremely effective, as they brought Eirene to her side. Upon attending Michael's dramatic performance, Eirene shared Anna's feelings and agreed with her moral judgement. This time it was Eirene herself who ran back to the palace to intercede for Michael's rescue. Evidently, the female perspective as determined by the two imperial women's compassion changed the male perception of Alexios, who reasoned about the ruler's justice. The just ruler was thus transformed



into a compassionate ruler, who earned the respect and admiration of the community, which experienced katharsis through the sparing of Michael's eyes.

Anna's actual and implied audiences were first addressed in the prooimion of the *Alexiad*, where they coincide; subsequently they were frequently evoked, either together or separately. Upon revealing her own grief, Anna turned to the work's audiences to determine their emotional response to the performance. In the course of the prologue's monody, which was examined briefly above (2. Characterization), Anna produced the audiences' affective position as follows: '[T]he accounts concerning me [...] would move the hearer to tears and induce the empathy not only of the animate nature, but also of the inanimate one' ('τὰ δέ γε κατ' ἐμὲ διηγῆματα [...] ἐς δάκρυα τὸν ἀκροατὴν συγκινήσειε καὶ οὐκ αἰσθητικὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄψυχον φύσιν εἰς πάθος καταναγκάσειε').<sup>54</sup>

Even though Anna used the masculine noun 'ἀκροατής' ('listener') in the above quotation, she most probably had a mixed audience in mind inviting it to empathize with her.<sup>55</sup> Byzantinists agree that the high stylistic level of the *Alexiad* suggests that Anna's real and intended audiences consisted of 'a very small circle of highly educated literary people, who understood and shared [her] literary ambitions'.<sup>56</sup> However, these 'literary people' have never been identified. Since Anna wrote the *Alexiad* at the Convent of the Mother of God *Kecharitomene* in Constantinople,<sup>57</sup> it is highly probable that the work was read to or by the convent's high-born nuns and its visitors, including members of the aristocracy and the (male) intellectuals who revived Aristotelian studies under Anna's patronage (e.g. Michael of Ephesos, Eustratios the Metropolitan of Nicaea, and James of Venice).<sup>58</sup>

By systematically calling upon the actual and intended audiences' emotional responses to her own emotionality and those of the other characters and fictional audiences, Anna anticipated not only cognitive poetics, which sees reading as an emotive–cognitive interaction between readers and texts, but also contemporary emotion research, which suggests that a reader responds with empathy when an author stages 'eliciting patterns of emotion'.<sup>59</sup> Negative emotions in particular have been proved more efficient in evoking a reader's 'empathetic responses',<sup>60</sup> which 'don't simply dissipate' after the reading has ended, 'but may have an impact that lasts hours or days, long after closing the covers of the book, perhaps re-emerging whenever the book is brought to mind'.<sup>61</sup> Oatley concludes that 'great writers allow readers to respond creatively,

to feel moved emotionally, to understand within themselves some of the relations between actions and emotions, and sometimes to undergo cognitive change'.<sup>62</sup>

Indeed, in Oatley's terms and from the perspective of cognitive poetics, Anna was a 'great' author. The disclosure of her own emotions and associated thoughts along with her (emotional) responses to other characters' feelings and (emotive) behaviour endowed her voice with an authenticity that engaged the actual audience. By opening up her mental, emotional, and psychological world, Anna emerged honest about herself and the reasons for her writing. Apart from saving important historical events from oblivion, the production of the *Alexiad* appears to have been a therapeutic means through which Anna tried to deal with her own traumas and negative emotions. As Margaret Mullett remarks, when she described herself as a 'stranger to herself' (*Alexiad* Bk 15.XI.22.42–44), 'Anna in her grief and disappointment was also trying to express' a 'fear of alterity' and to make sense of a situation that was shared by other traumatized people.<sup>63</sup> Briefly, here emotional and mental openness created an actively involved reader or listener, whose deep engagement with the text, its characters, and audiences (fictional and intended) could have had a powerful impact upon him or her at different levels: emotional, cognitive, and creative.

Two of Anna's most creative readers are the fourteenth-century anonymous rewriter or metaphrast of the *Alexiad* and the contemporary feminist, psychoanalyst, and novelist Julia Kristeva, who, among her other works, has published a detective novel entitled *Meurtre à Byzance* that is actually a modern adaptation of the *Alexiad*.<sup>64</sup> Unfortunately, the fragmentary form in which the palaiologan version of the *Alexiad* has come down to us does not allow for safe conclusions regarding the Byzantine rewriter's profile or his or her empathetic responses to Anna's emotive text.<sup>65</sup>

In Kristeva's case, however, we have, as expected, sufficient information to know that she both empathizes and identifies with Anna and that her affective responses to the *Alexiad* are gendered female.<sup>66</sup> In an interview about her novel *Meurtre à Byzance*, Kristeva states:

But it was my mother's death that made me reconstruct the entire novel. The various traumas that have punctuated my life, perhaps the caesura of exile, which is a sort of death and resurrection, and also the constant opening to the unconscious, which psychoanalytical listening is, make me live in the moment: a vertical time, suspended. I had the strange impression time

had stopped for me. But the death of both my parents and the acceleration of recent history suddenly brought me back to passing time: from the current crusade to the ancient crusaders, as well as to my own lineage.<sup>67</sup>

Like Anna, Kristeva turned to writing in an attempt to deal with her inconsolable grief at the death of her parents. Her other personal traumas and her exposure to those of others through psychoanalysis made her lose a sense of time in a way that recalls Anna's 'living in the moment', her alterity and experience of the cancellation of historical time whenever she was overwhelmed by strong negative emotions.<sup>68</sup> Kristeva's loss, as was the case with that of Anna, reminded her of the quick passing of time and of the urgent need to get her grip on time by turning to history and her lineage.<sup>69</sup> Anna gained access to history through her dead husband's records, which she rewrote in the *Alexiad*. Kristeva's access to history was achieved through the incorporation of Anna's historical work in a detective novel, the genre in which she could better articulate her own psyche.<sup>70</sup> It was their access to history that allowed the two authors to both adopt a male discourse and to mourn their parents as good daughters. Kristeva reconstructs the historical past and remembers her parents by both remembering Anna and becoming her double.

However, Anna's bid to win the sympathy of her actual audiences was not always successful. Interestingly, it was mostly unsuccessful among male scholars from Edward Gibbon to James Howard-Johnston rather than among women historians. For Gibbon, Anna was a vain, vengeful, dissembling, and uncontrolled woman.<sup>71</sup> Charles Diehl described her 'as a passionate woman, consumed by hatreds and resentments'.<sup>72</sup> Howard-Johnston concluded that no woman could have been the sole author of the *Alexiad*.<sup>73</sup> In contrast, Penelope Buckley argues that Anna was a talented author who used her masterful knowledge to shape her father as the ideal Byzantine emperor.<sup>74</sup> More recently, Neville has defended Anna against the accusations of male historians, both Byzantine and modern. She disputes Michael Choniates's negative characterization of Anna and absolves her of guilt for the supposed crimes against her family. Neville contends that the writing of the *Alexiad* was not 'something she did to pass the time after her life was over, sitting in prison and stewing in hatred'.<sup>75</sup> On the contrary, the *Alexiad* is a masterful twelfth-century work in which Anna successfully performed her dual role as an imperial woman and a historian.

In conclusion, the preceding discussion of the *Alexiad* through the perspective of its gendered emotionality (rhetorical, characterological, and narrative) and that of its author and audiences is designed, apart from bringing together the themes that have been explored in this volume, to disclose other hidden aspects and influences of this multilayered and extremely important text. In so doing, this analysis strongly supports the new wave of *Alexiad* scholarship that began with the publication in 2000 of Thalia Gouma-Peterson's volume *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, which is an attempt to resolve previous misconceptions (generally expressed by male scholars) about Anna and her work.

### FUTURE RESEARCH

I must note once again that this volume represents a very preliminary attempt to explore the intersections between Byzantine emotions and gender. It is designed to stimulate scholarly interest in the gendered emotions in Byzantine culture. A lot of work remains to be done and further research questions have to be posed and developed. For instance, a range of questions that should be dealt with concerns the workings of Byzantine gendered emotions: What do Byzantine voices, words, facial expressions, gestures, and even clothing say about male and female emotionality? How were male and female emotionalities structured and how did they interact with each other in different times, situations, spaces, and contexts? What does one gendered emotion tell us about others and which emotions appear together? To what extent did ritual shape or was shaped by gendered emotionality? Under what circumstances could Byzantines violate conventions about gendered emotionality? What about such emotions as surprise and wonder, which have not been discussed here and, at first glance, appear genderless? Were there any genderless sentiments? How were artistic forms (literary and visual) transformed by changing attitudes towards male and female emotionality?

Another set of important questions is related to social class and how it determined gendered emotions. For the most part, the volume's contributors have focused on the emotional interactions of elite men and women. What about the emotionality of men and women belonging to lower classes? How did men or women of the aristocracy interrelate with men or women of lower social strata? Finally, there are other significant questions that concern the gendered emotionality involved in human

relationships (between the same or different genders), such as kinship and friendship, as well as relationships between teachers and pupils, spiritual fathers and mothers and their spiritual children, and among fellow monastics or fellow soldiers. What kinds of emotional patterns were involved in these cases?

There are many questions and they are often difficult to deal with, but they highlight the fact that the intersection of gender and emotion in Byzantium is an extremely promising field, which should yield fascinating material for scholars in the years to come.

## NOTES

1. Pedro Avero and Manuel G. Calvo, 'Emotional Reactivity to Social-Evaluative Stress: Gender Differences in Response Systems Concordance', *Personality and Individual Differences* 27.1 (1999): 155–70; Lisa Feldman Barrett, Lucy Robin, Paula R. Pietromonaco, and Kristen M. Eysell, 'Are Women the "More Emotional" Sex? Evidence From Emotional Experiences in Social Context', *Cognition and Emotion* 12.4 (1998): 555–78; Jessica Benetti-McQuoid and Krisanne Bursik, 'Individual Differences in Experiences of and Responses to Guilt and Shame: Examining the Lenses of Gender and Gender Role', *Sex Roles* 53.1–2 (2005): 133–42; Leslie R. Brody, 'Beyond Stereotypes: Gender and Emotion', *Journal of Social Issues* 53 (1997): 369–93; eadem, *Gender, Emotion and Family* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Agneta H. Fisher (ed.), *Gender and Emotion/Emotional: Social Psychological Perspectives* (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2000).
2. Leslie R. Brody and Judith A. Hall, 'Gender and Emotion in Context', in *Handbook of Emotions*, 3rd ed., ed. Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2008), 395–408, at 395.
3. For the interrelation of gender and emotion in antiquity, see, e.g. Barbara Koziak, 'Homeric *Thumos*: The Early History of Gender, Emotion and Politics', *The Journal of Politics* 61.4 (1999): 1068–91; eadem, *Retrieving Political Emotion/Emotional: Thumos, Aristotle and Gender* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000); Dana LaCourse Munteanu (ed.), *Emotion, Genre and Gender in Classical Antiquity* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011). For the early modern period, see, e.g. Lesel Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender in Early Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ute Frevert, *Emotions in History: Lost and Found* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2011).

4. Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Controlling Paradigms', in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. eadem (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 233–47, at 245–46.
5. See, e.g. Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Lisa Perfetti (ed.), *The Representation of Women's Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005); Jeff Rider and Jamie Friedman (eds.), *The Inner Life of Women in Medieval Romance Literature: Grief, Guilt, and Hypocrisy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Jennifer C. Vaught (ed.), *Grief and Gender: 700–1700* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
6. Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam, 1994).
7. Paul J. Silvia, 'Emotional Responses to Art: From Collation and Arousal to Cognition and Emotion', *Review of General Psychology* 9.4 (2005): 342–57; Keith Oatley, 'A Taxonomy of the Emotions of Literary Response and a Theory of Identification in Fictional Narrative', *Poetics* 23 (1994): 53–74.
8. Peter Stockwell, *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 4–5.
9. Terence Cave, *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
10. For a use of Butler's theory of gender performativity within this volume, see the chapter by Andreou.
11. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 25.
12. *Ibid.*, 33.
13. Katia Galatariotou, 'Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Concepts of Gender', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1984/5): 55–94; Linda Garland, 'The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women', *Byzantion* 58 (1988): 361–93; Judith Herrin, 'In Search of Byzantine Women: Three Avenues of Approach', in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, ed. Averil M. Cameron and Amélie Kuhrt (London: Routledge, 1983), 167–90; Liz James, 'The Role of Women', in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 643–51; eadem, 'Men, Women, Eunuchs: Gender, Sex, and Power', in *A Social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 31–50; Angeliki Laiou, 'The Role of Women in Byzantine Society', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31.1 (1981): 233–60; eadem, 'Observations on the Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 9 (1985): 59–102; eadem, 'Women in Byzantine Society', in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York and

- London: Taylor and Francis, 1999), 81–94; Lena-Mari Peltomaa, ‘Gender and Byzantine Studies from the Viewpoint of Methodology’, *Anzeiger der phil.-hist. Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 140.1 (2005): 23–44; Kathryn M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 16, 75; Alice-Mary Talbot, ‘Women’, in *The Byzantines*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo, trans. Thomas Dunlap, Teresa Lavender Fagan, and Charles Lambert (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 117–43.
14. James, ‘The Role of Women’, 648.
  15. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant*, 128–41, at 128.
  16. See, e.g. Agapetos’s, ‘*Advice to the Emperor Justinian*’, in *Agapetos Diakonos: Der Fürstenspiegel für Kaiser Iustinianos*, ed. Rudolf Riedinger, Centre for Byzantine Research 4 (Athens: Etaireia Philōn tou Laou, 1995), chs. 4, 13, 14, 31, 40 (pride); 65 (shame).
  17. For man’s role as the head of the family, see Stavroula Constantinou, ‘Woman’s Head Is Man: *Kyriarchy* and the Rhetoric of Women’s Subordination in Byzantine Literature’, in *The Bible and Women: An Encyclopaedia of Exegesis and Cultural History*, Vol. 6.1: *Early Middle Ages*, ed. Franca Ela Consolino and Judith Herrin (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature Press, 2018), in press.
  18. Prokopios’s, *Secret History*: i.11–v (Antonina); ix–x.1–10 (Theodora), in *Procopius*, *Historia Arcana*, vol. 3, ed. Jacob Haury (Leipzig: Teubner, 1963).
  19. Psellos’s, ‘*Encomium for his Mother*: 8.b–d, 9a, 9d’, in *Michele Psello: Autobiografia, Encomio per la madre*, ed. Ugo Criscuolo (Naples: M. D’Auria Editore, 1989).
  20. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 139.
  21. *Ibid.*, 139–40.
  22. Prokopios’s, *Secret History*: ix.25–26; trans. in H. B. Dewing, *Procopius Secret History*, LCL 290, 111.
  23. See, e.g. Charles Diehl’s portraits of Byzantine empresses (Charles Diehl, *Figures Byzantines* [Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1906]).
  24. For the understanding of holiness as a male attribute, see, e.g. Susan Ashbrook-Harvey, ‘Women in Early Byzantine Hagiography: Reversing the Story’, in *That Gentle Strength: Historical Perspectives on Women in Christianity*, ed. Linda Coon et al. (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1990), 36–59; Kerstin Aspegren, *The Male Woman: A Feminine Idea in the Early Church*, Uppsala Women’s Studies: A, Women in Religion 4 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1990); Elizabeth Castelli, ‘*I Will Make Mary Male*: Pieties of the Body and Gender Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity’, in



- Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, ed. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub (London and New York: Routledge), 29–49; Natalie Delierneux, ‘Virilité physique et sainteté féminine dans l’hagiographie orientale du IV<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Byzantion* 67 (1997): 179–243; Evelyn Patlagean, ‘L’histoire de la femme déguisée en moine et l’évolution de la sainteté féminine à Byzance’, *Studi Medievali* 3 (1976): 597–623.
25. See, e.g. how Theophanes the Confessor describes Emperor Nikephoros I (802–811) in his *Chronography*: ‘However, his practice was quite laughable to those who were well acquainted with it, as his disgusting face always had to blush despite his shamelessness. He was unable to leave the imperial bedchamber for seven days because he kept on weeping; he was naturally given to effeminate tears’ (‘πλὴν γελοιότατος ἦν τοῖς εἰδόσιν ἀκριβῶς τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα, ὥστε κάκεινον ἀναιδεῖα πολλῆ ζεσοφωμένον τὸ μιαιρώτατον αὐτοῦ πρόσωπον αἰεὶ, τότε ἀπρόϊτον γενέσθαι ἐπὶ ἡμέρας ζ’ <ἐπὶ> τοῦ βασιλικοῦ κοιτῶνος κλαυθυριζόμενον, ἐπεὶ καὶ φυσικῶς αὐτῷ γυναικῶδη προσῆσαν δάκρυα’); trans. Harry Turtledove, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Anni mundi 6095–6305 (A.D. 602–813)* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 161–62; ed. Carl Gotthard de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* Vol. 1 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1883; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1963), 480.26–30. For men’s tears in the eleventh and twelfth century, see Margaret Mullett, ‘Do Brothers Weep? Male Grief, Mourning, Lament and Tears in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Byzantium’, in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and After*, ed. Margaret Alexiou and Douglas Cairns, Edinburgh Leventis Studies 8 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 312–37. See also Martin Hinterberger, ‘Tränen in der Byzantinischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Emotionen’, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006): 27–51.
26. See, e.g. Amy Coplan, ‘Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions’, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art and Criticism* 62.2: Special Issue: Art, Mind, and Cognitive Science (2004): 141–52; Suzanne Keen, ‘A Theory of Narrative Empathy’, *Narrative* 14.3 (2006): 207–36; Stockwell, *Cognitive Poetics*; idem, *Texture: A Cognitive Aesthetics of Reading* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012); Blakey Vermeule, *Why Do We Care About Literary Characters?* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010). For Byzantine audiences’ emotive responses to representations of (gendered) emotions, see below ‘Affective Gendered Audiences’.
27. Alan Palmer, *Fictional Minds* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 112.
28. Some exceptions are the following: David Herman, ‘Cognition, Emotion, and Consciousness’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*,



- ed. idem (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 245–59; Palmer, *Fictional Minds*; Lalita Pandit, ‘Emotion, Perception and Anagnorisis in *The Comedy of Errors*: A Cognitive Perspective’, *College Literature* 33.1 (2006): 94–126; Ralf Schneider, ‘Toward a Cognitive Theory of Literary Character: The Dynamics of Mental-Model Construction’, *Style* 35.4 (2001): 607–39. It has to be pointed out that even in these studies the examination of the fictional characters’ emotions are designed to provide a better understanding of the readers’ reception of a given storyworld rather than an analysis of narrative poetics.
29. A couple of relevant studies are the following: Cassandra Laity and Nancy K. Gish (eds.), *Gender, Desire, and Sexuality in T. S. Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Charles Segal, *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow: Art, Gender and Commemoration in Alcestis, Hippolytus, and Hecuba* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993).
  30. Leonora Neville, ‘Lamentation, History, and Female Authorship in Anna Komnene’s *Alexiad*’, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53 (2013): 192–218; eadem, ‘The Authorial Voice of Anna Komnēnē’, in *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions, and Identities*, ed. Aglae Pizzone (Boston and Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 263–74; eadem, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Ingela Nilsson, ‘Comforting Tears and Suggestive Smiles: To Laugh and Cry in the Komnenian Novel’, in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Late Antiquity, Byzantium and Beyond* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 291–311.
  31. See, e.g. Prologue IV.3.31–32: reference to Euripides’s *Hecuba* 518 and Bk 15.XI.21.29–30: reference to Euripides’s *Orestes* 1–3, in Diether R. Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis (eds.), *Annae Komnenae Alexias, pars prior prolegomena et textus* CFHB 40.1, 10, 504.
  32. Penelope Buckley, *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene: Artistic Strategy in the Making of a Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 176–89; Jakov Ljubarskij, ‘Why Is the *Alexiad* a Masterpiece of Byzantine Literature?’, in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, 169–86, at 179; Ruth Macrides, ‘The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?’, in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2000), 63–82, at 67; Diether R. Reinsch, ‘Women’s Literature in Byzantium?: The Case of Anna Komnene’, in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, 83–106, at 88.
  33. These are two other instances in which Anna imitates Psellos. In his *Chronographia*, Psellos assumes male and female features and inscribes his own autobiography. See Stratis Papaioannou, ‘Michael Psellos’s Rhetorical Gender’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 24 (2000): 133–46; idem, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 29–31, 192–231.

34. ‘The lack of bravery is a characteristic of women’, Bk 15.II.2.8 (Unless otherwise indicated, English translations are my own; ‘γυναικῶδες [...] καὶ ἀθαρσῆς ἦθος’, Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 464); ‘the fondness for lamentation belongs to women’, Bk 4.IV.1.1 (‘τὸ τῶν γυναικῶν φιλοπενθεῆς’, Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 126).
35. ‘Among these men, some bemoaned for the sufferings of those taken away to Persia [...]. Those who remained within the Roman frontiers were deeply sighing; one was lamenting for a son and another for a daughter; another one was crying severely for a brother or a nephew who had immaturely died and all shed fervent tears like women’, Bk 15.X.5.9–14 (‘ἐν τούτοις οἱ μὲν ἐποπνιῶντο ἐφ’ οἷς ἔπασχον πρὸς Περσίδα ἀπαγόμενοι, οἱ δ’ ἔτι περιόντες, εἴ που τινὲς τοῖς ῥωμαϊκοῖς ὀρίοις ἐναπέμειναν, βύθιον στένοντες ὁ μὲν υἱόν, ὁ δὲ θυγατέρα ἐθρήνει, ὁ δὲ ἀδελφόν, ὁ δὲ ἀδελφιδοῦν ἀπεκλαίετο πρὸ καιροῦ θνήσκοντα καὶ οἷα γυναικῆς θερμὸν κατέσταζον δάκρυον’, Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 493).
36. See also Barbara Hill, ‘Actions Speak Louder Than Words: Anna Komnene’s Attempted Usurpation’, in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, 45–62.
37. Bk 12.III.6.33–34 and Bk 15.II.2.6–14 (Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 366, 464).
38. Another technique of characterization employed by Anna is ekphrasis (see Niki Touriki, ‘Ekphrasis in the *Alexiad*’, *Diogenes* 1 [2014]: 46–56).
39. Palmer, *Fictional Minds*, 38. Character has been approached from a number of perspectives. For a short introduction to theories of character, see Uri Margolin, ‘Character’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, 66–79.
40. Uri Margolin, ‘Structuralist Approaches to Character in Narrative: The State of the Art’, *Semiotica* 75.1–2 (1989): 1–24, at 4.
41. Prologue II.2.28–32, 34–38; IV.1.94–95, 1; IV.2.16–20; IV.3.27–28, 30, 37–39 (Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 6–7, 9, 10).
42. E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, ed. Oliver Stallybrass (London and New York: Penguin, 1990), 87.
43. Nilsson, ‘Comforting Tears and Suggestive Smiles’.
44. For the plot of Byzantine novels, see Joan B. Burton, ‘Abduction and Elopement in the Byzantine Novel’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 41 (2000): 377–409; Linda Garland, “‘Be Amorous, but Be Chaste...’”: Sexual Morality in Byzantine Learned and Vernacular Romance’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 14 (1990): 62–120; Suzanne MacAlister, *Dreams and Suicides: The Greek Novel from Antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 115–52.

45. According to Walter J. Ong, an author's audience is another aspect of fiction: Walter J. Ong, 'The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction', *Modern Language Association* 90.1 (1975): 9–21.
46. There is also a fourth category of audience that is detected in works such as the *Menologion of Basil II* (Cantone) and the *Synopsis Chronike* of Konstantinos Manasses, that is, the intended audience, which is identified by dedications and addresses to patrons (e.g. Emperor Basil II and Eirene *Sebastokratorissa*).
47. In hagiography (Andreou, Messis and Nilsson), the textual audience often consists of the spectators of the martyrs' public tortures (Passions) or of the pilgrims who witness the ascetics' feats (Lives). In erotic literature (Messim and Nilsson), the fictional audience generally includes the spectators of the protagonists' sufferings.
48. The fictional audiences of the *Alexiad* are so many and diverse that they cannot be dealt with here. In fact, they deserve an independent study.
49. See Soteria-Alexia Protogyrou, *Rhetorical Theatricality in the Work of Michael Psellos*, unpublished PhD thesis in Greek submitted at the University of Cyprus (2014); Buckley, *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene*, 232–35.
50. Anna herself states her good knowledge of the Aristotelian work (Prologue I.2.13).
51. Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 [1986]), 388–90.
52. For an analysis of Aristotle's approach to tragedy as a political means enabling a community's rebalancing and self-understanding, see Marina Berzins McCoy, *Wounded Heroes: Vulnerability as Virtue in Ancient Greek Literature and Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 169–203.
53. Bk 12.VI.6.27–36, 7.43–50 (Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 375).
54. Prologue IV.1.13–16 (Reinsch and Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 9).
55. Byzantine historiographers often use the word 'ἄκροατῆς' to refer to a mixed audience (e.g. George Kedrenos, *Synopsis Historiōn*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, *Georgius Cedrenus, Ioannis Scylitzae ope*, 2 vols., CSHB 8, 9 [Bonn: Weber, 1838, 1839], Vol. 2, 614, 22; John Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiōn*, ed. Ioannes Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum, CFHB 2* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973], Mich 6.2.14). For the audiences of Byzantine historiography, see Brian Croke, 'Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographical Audience', in *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Papers for the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies,

- University of Birmingham, April 2007), ed. Ruth Macrides, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies 15 (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 25–53. See also Ralph-Johannes Lilie, ‘Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 68 (2014): 157–210; Ingela Nilsson and Roger Scott, ‘Towards a New History of Byzantine Literature: The Case of Historiography’, *Classica et Mediaevalia* 58 (2007): 319–32. The use of words in male forms to address mixed audiences can also be detected in Byzantine hagiography (see Claudia Rapp, ‘Figures of Female Sanctity: Byzantine Edifying Manuscripts and Their Audience’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 50 [1996]: 313–44, at 324–25).
56. Lilie, ‘Reality and Invention’, 209. See also Croke, ‘Uncovering Byzantium’s Historiographical Audience’, 43; Roger Scott, ‘Text and Context in Byzantine Historiography’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 251–62, at 260–62.
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